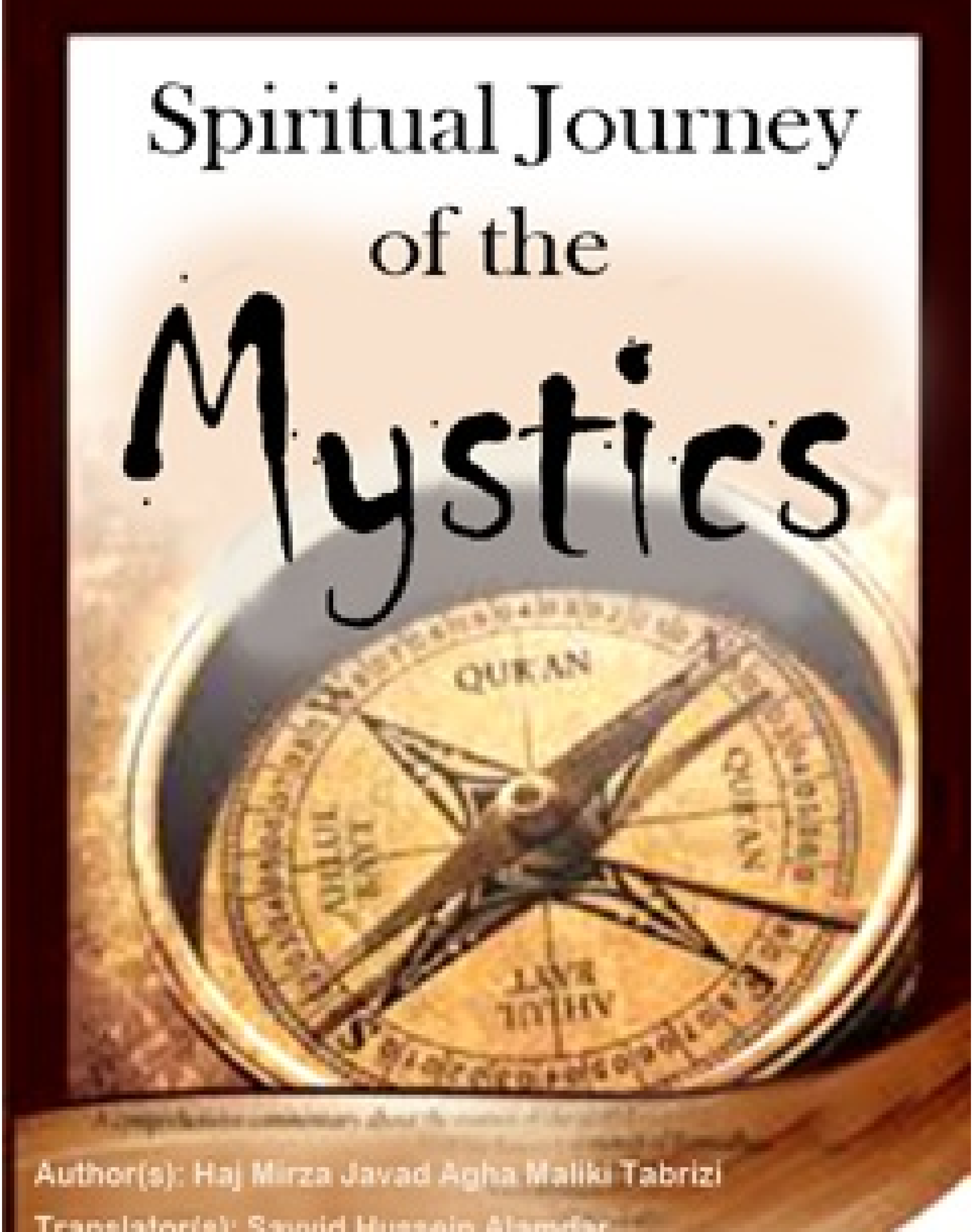

Spiritual Journey of the Mystics
QURAN
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(Spiritual Journey of the Mystics (Suluk al–Arifan

BOOK ID

Author(s): Haj Mirza Javad Agha Maliki Tabrizi

Translator(s): Sayyid Hussein Alamdar

Category: Education Spirituality

Topic Tags: Irfan Mystic Philosophy Ramadhan

point

Etiquette of the Holy Month of RamadhanEtiquette and codes of special deeds performed by Allah's most sincere servants during the Holy Month of Ramadhan; the self-restraint and asceticism practised by them during these worships and the self-purification achieved by them.

Dedication

This translation work is dedicated to the First Martyr of the Altar (Mehrab) during the Holy Month of Ramadhan, Imam 'Ali [a], as well to the lofty spirits of all the Martyrs of Islam, who waged Jihad and chose martyrdom for the way of Allah, proclamation of Monotheism (Tawhid), defence of Islamic lands, and governance of Qur'anic commands combating against the oppression and arrogance for the defence of deprived and oppressed.

A request from the Translator

Dear Readers! Please recite a Surah al-Fatihah for my deceased father, who left this transient world in the Holy Month of Ramadhan in the year ۱۹۷۶, thanks.

Translator's Foreword

"In the Name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful"

The Day of Judgement in the Holy Qur'an has been described as the Day of Regret

(Yaum al-Hasrat), when the people would witness the inner essence of this world for the first time with their own eyes; they would then be crying: Is there a way to get out of Hell?(۱)۱

But then it would be too late. Unfortunately, for most of the people, it is only after their death or their being transferred into other world that they

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۱- (The Holy Qur'an (۴۰:۱۲)

witness the esoteric essence of this creation. But the esoteric essence of this creation is a reality and there exists a complete harmony and co-ordination among its various .constituents

In the Islamic narrations it has been mentioned, that if a group of people are sitting at a place, then in case if they were engaged in a righteous deed, that piece of earth prays and seeks Allah's forgiveness (istighfar) for them. But if they were busy in sinning, the same spot sends cursing upon them. For a pious righteous scholar (alim al-rabbani), it is said that the whole universe, i.e. earth, mountains, plants, rivers, and even the fishes inside the water pray and seek Allah's forgiveness (istighfar) for (him.(١

Therefore, there is a direct relationship between human existence and the created world, if he sins the entire creation curses upon him, likewise if he engages into Allah's servitude and obedience, the entire creation prays for him and beseech Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), to bestow upon him His best blessings and bounties. Because, a sinner moves in the direction opposite to the divine aim of human creation, his sinning creates a disorder in the aim of human creation which is the movement towards Allah .((the Glorious, the Exalted

Since, Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), likes the tears of shame of sinners, he has created the Holy Month of Ramadhan a month of blessings and mercy. It is a month of worship, prayers, supplications, repentance, night-vigil, and self-purification. Worshipping in this month is

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Friday Prayer sermon of Tehran delivered by Ayatullah Imami Kashani on - ١ Ramadhan ١٠, ١۴١٨, Jan. ٩, ١٩٩٨

.bestowed rewards many times the reward of worship performed in other months

Even the sleeping and breathing of a believer are given the reward of a worship. It is a month when the gates of Paradise are opened while Hell's doors are closed. Divine angels continuously invite the people towards Allah's worship, especially at the dawn on the Night of Power (Lailatul-Qadr) in which the worshipping and night-vigil are (superior than the prayer of thousand months.(١

Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), in this month has granted an audience inviting all the believers for a divine feast, the invitation of which has been brought by His .messengers

The host is the Most Merciful and Compassionate Lord, His favourite angels are the servants, and the believers are the guests. The tablecloth of divine blessings, containing all sorts of rewards and favours has been spread. From all dimensions the divine special blessings and favours which can't be seen by the eyes, ears are helpless to hear about them, and human hearts can not even imagine them are readied to be awarded upon the guests in accordance to their merits, worth, and absorbing capacities. If we are negligent, we will feel regret on the Day of Judgement whereby feeling sorry and being regretful will not be of any advantage. There is a detailed sermon delivered by the Holy Prophet [s] describing the importance of this blessed :month, a portion of which is quoted here as follows

O' people the month of Allah with blessing mercy and"

(The Holy Qur'an (٩٧:٣ -١

pardon has came to you, a month which is the best month among all months before Him; its days are the best days; its nights are the best nights and its hours are the best hours. It is the month in which you have been invited by Allah for a feast and have been selected as the recipient of this special favour. Your breathings merit the .reward of a worship. In this month your deeds are accepted and prayers are granted

Therefore, with true intention and pure hearts beseech Allah to bestow upon you His special favour to be able to observe fasting and recite the Holy Qur'an. Because, the most unfortunate and wretched one is the who remains deprived from Allah's pardon during this great month. With your thirst and hunger remind yourself about the thirst and hunger of the Day of Judgement; pay charity to poor and destitute people, pay respect to elders; be kind towards youngsters, and observe the bonds of relationship ".with your kith and kin

The Holy Month of Ramadhan is directly related to Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), because, it is the only month whose name has been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, the month in which the Holy Qur'an after descending through various veils in the Celestial Kingdom was revealed upon the sacred heart of the Holy Prophet [s] though :Archangel Gabriel as described in the Holy Qur'an as follows

The Holy Month of Ramadhan in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for" mankind, and

".(clear proofs of the guidance, and the criterion (of right and wrong

.(Holy Qur'an (۲:۱۸۵ -

The present book is the English translation of the Persian book: Spiritual Journey of the Mystics (Saluk al-Arifan) - which is the translation of Arabic book: al-Muraqebat fi Amal al-Sunnah, written by the most eminent perfect mystic Late Hajj Mirza Javad Agha Maliki Tabrizi. As the enclosed biography would reveal, he was the most eminent gnostic and ascetic of his period, who had attained the most Exalted mystic position of (Kashf-wa-Shahud) a spiritual position, whereby the curtains are rolled up from the wayfarers esoteric eyes, enabling him to see into the unseen far beyond the limits of .this material world

The book presents a detailed description of etiquette and codes of special deeds performed by Allah's most sincere servants during the Holy Month of Ramadhan; the self-restraint and asceticism practised by them during these worships and the self-.purification achieved by them

The present translation covers the following topics: deeds and etiquette of the Holy Month of Ramadhan, special distinction of the Holy Month of Ramadhan, the splendour and eminence of supplications compiled by the Ahlul-Bait [a], etiquette and codes of prayer, the leadership (Imamat) and preaching (Va'iz), the Night of Power (Lailatul-Qadr), the last night of the Holy Month of Ramadhan, the commentary - world being the House of Illusion (Dar al-Gharoor), how to farewell the Holy Month of Ramadhan, and comments about the sense and perception among the solid bodies .etc

If the readers are seriously interested

to discover the inner essence of the Ramadhan's reality far beyond the apparent rituals of not eating and drinking etc., they will find the content of this book highly useful and interesting. In the end, I would like to mention about the most severe calamity of our times, especially in the advanced materialistic societies which is - the :[dryness of the eyes. Following is a tradition narrated by Imam al-Sajjad [a

O' Lord! I do complain to you, against the dryness of the eyes, which do not cry, are" not afraid of you, and instead take pleasure in looking whatever makes them ".pleased

Bihar al-Anwar vol. ۹۴, p.۱۴۳ -

:And the following narration

The dryness of the eyes is the result of hard-heartedness; hard-heartedness is" caused due to excessive sinning; excessive sins are the result of consumption of food, which is arranged through forbidden and unlawful income; earning through forbidden and unlawful means is due to forgetting death; forgetting death is due to lengthy desires; lengthy desires are caused because of attachment to the world; and the ".world's attachment is the root of all evils

Therefore, if after offering daily prayers, recital of Dua Kumail,(۱) in the Qunoot of night-prayer, performance of deeds during the Nights of Power (Lailatul-Qadr) in the Holy Month of Ramadhan, and in general while communicating and establishing a link with the Most Supreme Reality, if one cannot shed a tear, then he should resort to .spiritual physicians immediately without any further delay

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to all

۱- Dua-Kumail: The Prayer of Kumail, a prayer taught to Kumail bin Ziyad - a close associate of Imam Ali [a] - by the Imam [a]. Its recitation is particularly recommended during Friday night (i.e., night after the end of Thursday). For the text see Sheikh

[.Abbas Qummi's Mafatih al-Jinan pp. ٨٣-٩٠ [Tr

of those who have contributed towards the realisation of this translation, especially Ayatullah Ibrahim Amini, the learned scholar and jurisprudent from the Religious Learning Centre of Qum, and Hajj Agha Ansariyan for their encouragement, guidance, and valuable suggestions. I am indebted to my wife Mrs. Fatimeh Razavi and my daughter Miss. Saman Zaidi in their painstaking efforts and endeavours for typesetting and designing of the text. Elucidatory footnotes added by the translator .[are identified with [Tr

In the end I wish to apologise to my readers for possible errors and omissions, and sincerely welcome their suggestions and comments regarding this work as well as other translation works of this translator, published earlier by the Ansariyan Publications, on the following address. Also, it will be highly useful if the readers could communicate and let us know their needs and requirements about the Islamic books which should be translated from Arabic and Persian into English. We look forward to .hear the comments of our dear readers

Sayyid Husayn Alamdar

Ramadhan ۲۷, ۱۴۱۸ January ۲۶, ۱۹۹۸ Tehran

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(.Biography of Late Hajj Mirza Javad Agha Malaki Tabrizi (R.A

The most distinguished jurisprudent and perfect mystic Late Hajj Mirza Javad Agha Malaki Tabrizi was born in Tabriz. After finishing early education at his home town, he left for Najaf al-Ashraf, which at that time was supposed to be the most reputable centre. At Najaf he attended the lectures of great learned jurisprudents such as Akhund Khorasani, writer of Kifayeh al-Usool, Hajj Agha Ridha Hamadani, writer of Misbah al-Faqiyeh, and Muhaddith Nouri, writer of Mustadrak

.al-Wasail

Also during this period he came in contact with most celebrated mystic personality of that time Akhund Mulla Husayn Quli Hamadani who was unique in knowledge, ethics, and mystics. Hajj Agha Malaki spent ۱۴ years with him and during this period acquired profound knowledge of moral ethics and mysticism from his learned teacher. Hajj Agha Malaki attained such higher spiritual positions in gnosticism that a great jurisprudent and scholar like Sheikh Muhammad Husayn Isfahani famous as Kampani - himself an outstanding authority of learning and deeds in a letter to Hajj Agha .Malaki seeks his instructions regarding ethics and mysticism

Hajj Agha Malaki returned to his native hometown Tabriz in the year ۱۳۲۰ or ۲۱ A.H. and settled down there, but after few years due to constitutional revolution the condition in Tabriz deteriorated, forcing him to migrate to Qum, where he started teaching jurisprudence from Faiz Kashani's Book: Mafatih as well as taught ethics (Akhlaq). Also, he kept himself busy in writing and had left many precious works. Ultimately, after living a fruitful life full of learning, writing, refinement, and purification of self, he left this transient world to join his Beloved in the morning of ۱۱th, Dhi'l-hijjah, ۱۳۴۳ A.H. His holy remains were buried in Mirzai-Qummi the Shaykhan-Qum Graveyard near the tomb of Mirzai-Qummi. The following verse .written in Persian reflects about his precious existence and the year of his demise

".The world lost its soul, and the nation lost its shelter"

His virtues and mystical perfection are far too great to

be confined in words. In order to satisfy the curiosity of our readers to know more about profundities of Islamic mysticism, the following reports narrated by authentic :sources will throw some light about the spiritual perfection of this great man

:One of his close friend and pupil had reported .۱

One night in the City of Shahrud in a dream I found myself in a plain where Imam al-" Mahdi [a](۱), the Lord and Master of the Age, together with a group of his companions, was leading the congregational prayer. With the intention of kissing his hand and salutations, when I approached him, I saw a Sheikh whose face was the manifestations of virtues and perfection sitting near the Imam. After awakening from this dream I kept thinking deeply about the dignified Sheikh who is so close to the .Imam [a]. I was so much interested to identify and meet him

Searching for him, I went to Mashhad hoping to locate him over there but could not," came to Tehran but still there was no news from him, ultimately, when I came to Qum, I found him in a small room at Faizyeh School busy in teaching. Having inquired about him, they said: 'He is Mirza Javad Malaki Tabrizi.' When I visited him he welcomed me warm-heartedly and with kindness, treated me in a manner as though he knows me, and was aware of that dream. After that I remained in his company and found him exactly the way I had first perceived him

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Imam al-Mahdi [a]: The son of Imam Hasan al-'Askari was born in Samarra on - ۱ Friday, ۱۵th. Sha'ban ۲۵۵ A.H. The twelfth Imam lived in hiding under the protection and tutorship of his father until the latter's martyrdom, when by Allah's command he went into occultation, during a period known as Lesser-occultation (al-Ghaybat al-Sughra). During this period, four special deputies in succession would answer the questions of the Shi'ah and resolve their problems. After that in the year ۳۲۹ A.H., the Imam [a] went into the Greater-occultation (al-Ghaybat al-Kubra) until a day when by Allah's command he will reappear to fill the world with justice as it is now filled with .[oppression [Tr

".in that dream

:Another one of his intimate friend has reported the following story .۲

One day after finishing the lecture Late Malaki went to the room of a religious" student in at Dar al-Shafa School; he thanked and appreciated the inmate and after sitting over there for a while came out of the room. Since I was accompanying him, I asked the reason of visiting this student, Hajj Agha Maliki answered: 'Last night near the dawn, I was bestowed with special divine grace which I understood was not due to my own deeds. When, I thought deeply, I discovered that this student is busy in night-vigil and in his night prayer has prayed for me, and those blessing were the '".result of his prayer. Therefore, I visited him for offering my appreciation and thanks

Late Malaki has a son who is the source of warmth and pleasure for his household. .۳ On the Day of Eid al-Ghadir(۱), when traditionally people visit the elderly personalities to offer greeting, his house is full of visitors. Suddenly, a female servant discovers the .dead body of his son floating inside the yard's water pool

She starts crying; the other women folk of Hajj Agha Malaki's household join her in loud crying; having heard the loud screams Hajj Agha Malaki comes to the backyard and sees the lifeless body of his dear one; he controls himself and asks the women folk to stop crying, the women stop lamentation and become silent, the dead body is placed in

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Eid al-Ghadir: In the tenth year of the Hijra, the Most Noble Messenger [s] set out -۱ from Mecca to perform his final, farewell Hajj. After carrying out the rituals of the pilgrimage and imparting necessary teachings to the people, he set out for Madina. When he was returning on ۱۸th. Dhi'l-hijjah (۱۰ March, ۶۳۲), on the road at a locale known as Ghadir al-Khumm (Ghadir-Pond), he ordered the caravan to halt. In the midst of one hundred and twenty thousand pilgrims from all over the Arabian peninsula, he took 'Ali's [a] hand, raised it aloft, and declared: "He of whom I am the mawla (the patron, master, and leader) of him 'Ali is also the mawla (man kuntu

mawlahu fa 'Aliun-mawlahu). O' Allah! Be friend of him who is his friend, and be the enemy of him who is his enemy (Allahuma waali man waalaahu wa 'aadi man 'aadaahu)." With this act, the question of the successor, who was to govern the affairs of the Muslims, guard the Sunna (the body of customary behaviour based on the Prophet's precedent), and uphold religious customs and laws, was settled for the Islamic society. The intent of the noble verse: 'O Messenger! Promulgate what has been revealed to you by your Lord, for if you do not, you will not have conveyed His message' (۵:۶۷) was carried out. The Most Noble Messenger [s] died shortly after returning to Madina. The above traditions of al-Ghadir are so abundantly reported and so commonly attested by hundreds of different transmitters belonging to all school of thoughts that it would be futile to doubt their authenticity. Ibn Kathir, a most staunch supporter of Sunni view point has devoted seven pages to this subject and has collected a great number of different isnads from which the tradition is narrated. Also, Imam Ahmad b. Hanbal has recorded this event in his Musnad

.a corner and they return inside the house in order to treat the visiting guests

Some of the guests remained for the lunch at his house. After the lunch, when the guests asked permission to leave, Hajj Agha Malaki says to some of his close friends: 'Please don't leave, I have to tell you something.' When all the guests leave the house, he informs them about the tragedy of his son's demise and seeks their help in making .the necessary arrangements for the funeral

۴. Late Hujjatul Islam Sayyid Mahmud Yazdi one of very close and intimate friends has :narrated the following

"When the time of night-prayer arrived he used to perform all the etiquette recommended for awakening namely: prostration and special supplications, used to cry in his bed, then he would come outside in the yard and looking at the sky would :recite the verse

'Lo! In the creation of earth and sky there are signs ..., (۱)' and while placing his head against the wall shed tears. During ablutions sitting on the water pool continued crying, while standing upon the prayer rug used to become agitated and cried a lot ".during prayer, and especially in Qunoot

۵. Late Hajj Agha Husayn Fatimi, a pious ascetic and an intimate friend of Late Malaki :has narrated

"When I returned from the Jamkaran Mosque, I was informed that Hajj Agha Malaki has inquired about me. Since, I knew that he was sick I rushed to see him. I presume it was Friday afternoon, I found

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۱- Tr] (۲:۱۶۴) The Holy Qur'an].

him laying in a bed, neat and clean, bathed, perfumed, and hair dyed readied for Dhohr and Asr prayer. He recited Adhan and Iqamah upon his bed, recited supplications and as soon as raised his hands for Takbirat-al-Ahram and said: Allahu Akbar, Allah is Great, his sacred spirit ascended towards the Celestial Kingdom, thus, the meanings of the narration: the prayer is believer's heavenly journey become truly manifested for him. Also, the meanings of "get readied for the prayer" 'qad qamat as-salat,' which in accordance to traditions has been described as the time of meeting with the Beloved, too became materialised for him, because he rushed to meet his .”Beloved with prayer

This was the brief life history of a perfect mystic. For the detailed biography the :readers may refer to the following books

Rehanateh al-Adab, vol.۵, p.۳۹۷, Naqba al-Beshar, vol.۱, p.۳۳۰, Ganjinai-danishmandan, .vol. ۱, p.۲۳۲ , preface to Resala Laqa-Allah and Simai-Farzangan pp. ۶۰-۷۰

Etiquette and Deeds of the Holy Month of Ramadhan

point

:It has been narrated from the Commander of the Faithful Imam 'Ali [a](۱) that

Don't say Ramadhan because, you don't know what Ramadhan is. Whoever says so" must pay charity and must offer an atonement fast, instead of saying Ramadhan, say ".the way Allah has called it the Month of Ramadhan

The most important duty of a devoted wayfarer in this great month is to understand the right of this Holy Month in which Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), has invited the wayfarers of His path for a feast. Also he must understand the correct meanings of fasting

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۱- The Commander of the Faithful 'Ali ibn Abu Talib [a]: was the first perfect exemplar of the teachings of the Most Noble Messenger [s]. 'Ali was raised by him from early

childhood and followed him like a shadow until the very end of the latter's life. He was like a moth before the prophetic flame; the final moment when he was separated from the Most Noble Messenger [s] was when he embraced his corpse and laid it to rest. 'Ali [a] was the first person after the Most Noble Messenger [s] to approach spiritual realities in the manner of philosophical reflection, that is, by free exercise of reason. He used many technical terms and laid out and organized the rules of Arabic grammar in order to protect the Holy Qur'an from copyist's errors. The exact scholarship, spiritual culture, and consideration of ethical, social, political, and even mathematical problems shown in 'Ali's [a] discourses, letters, and other documents that have reached us are astonishing. The wealth of these documents makes 'Ali [a] the best known individual among Muslims to have a full realization of the sublime goals of the Holy Qur'an and the critical and practical concepts of Islam as they should be realized. They testify to the soundness of the prophetic saying: "I am the city of knowledge, and 'Ali is its gate." Furthermore, he combined this knowledge with action. In short, 'Ali's outstanding character is beyond description, and his virtues are innumerable. Never in history has someone's character drawn the attention of the world's scholars and thinkers to such an extent [Tr].

and its relevance with Allah's invitation. Having discovered this reality he must endeavour that all his actions and deeds are accompanied with required devotion and .(sincerity in order to earn the pleasure of his host Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted

Effects of Fasting and Hunger .۱

Tolerance of hunger, the most obvious part of fasting, earns plenty of advantages for a devoted wayfarer journeying towards Allah's path from the point of view of enlightenment and knowledge of Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), as well as his advancement in attaining spiritual perfection. This has been emphasized in plenty of narrations, and therefore it would be appropriate to quote first an example and later :on to discuss about its wisdom. The Holy Prophet [s] has narrated

Engage yourself in self-struggle (Jihad al-Nafs) through the means of hunger and“ thirst, whose reward is equivalent to the reward of those who participated in the armed struggle for Allah's sake. There is nothing more superior before Allah's sight ”.than tolerating hunger and thirst during fasting

:Also said

The one who tolerates more hunger as well as ponders deeply about Allah as“ compared to others, will be assigned higher Exalted positions before their Lord on the ”.Day of Judgement

:Also, he said to Asma

O' Asma! If you may act in a manner that when the angel of death approaches you,“ he should find you hungry and thirsty. If you do it you will attain the most Exalted spiritual position, will join the ranks of prophets, will make the angels happy, and will earn the divine salutations for

".yourself

:And said

Keep your stomachs hungry and thirsty, and make your bodies used to hardships,“ ".perhaps your hearts will then have a chance of seeing Allah's glory

Also, in the narration of Prophet's heavenly journey (Me'raj) the following have been :narrated

O' Ahmad! Do you comprehend the outcome of fasting? 'No.' Replied the Holy“ Prophet [s]. 'The outcome of fasting is less eating and less talking.' Replied Allah, then :explained the outcome of silence and less speaking as follows

The result of silence is wisdom; the result of wisdom is enlightenment; the result of' enlightenment is certainty; and when a person attains the Exalted spiritual position of certainty, then he does not care how does he start his day, whether with ease or hardship, and tragedy or comfort. Such is the state of those who have attained the position of content, and whoever attains this position acquires three inseparable characteristics: thanks (shukr) not contaminated with ignorance, invocation (dhikr)(۱) '.not mixed with forgetfulness and love not mixed with the love of others

Whoever loves Me in this manner does not intermingle the love of others with My' friendship; I too love him and make others to love him; would make his heart's eyes opened, so that he could witness My Splendour and Majesty; would not deprive him from the knowledge and enlightenment bestowed by Me upon others; in the midst of night's darkness as well as during the brightness of the day would whisper and ;communicate with him, so that he becomes disgusted with other's company

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۱- dhikr: inducing or maintaining a state of Allah's awareness, especially by means of vocal or silent recitation of his Supreme Names. For details see Ayatullah Ibrahim Amini's Book: Self Building, pp. ۲۷۷-۲۸۴ [Tr.]

would have him listen to My speech as well as the speech of My angels; My secrets .which I keep hidden from others would become manifested upon him

Would saturate his wisdom with My enlightenment (ma'refat) and would sit Myself in' place of his wisdom; would make the pang of death and its hardships easier for him so that he would enter Paradise with ease and comfort. When the angel of death would descend upon him would speak to him: Welcome! Welcome! Welcome! Allah is '.anxiously waiting for you

:The narration continues

At this point Allah would speak to him: 'This is My Paradise, make yourself at home, and this is My neighbourhood in which you would be dwelling forever.' Then the soul would say: 'O' my Lord! You have introduced Yourself to me and after identifying You I .became detached with Your entire creation

By Your Splendour and Majesty I swear that in order to earn Your pleasure if I have to be slaughtered seventy times with extreme suffering and torture, even then Your consent would have been the most dearest and desirable thing for me.' At this point Allah would speak to him: 'I swear with My Splendour and Majesty that from now on there will never be any veil between Me and you, that you may see Me whenever you “ '.desire so; that is the way I treat my friends

The above-mentioned narration clearly explains the merit and wisdom of hunger, and on this basis the learned scholars of moral

ethics have described numerous advantages for hunger, some of them will be :mentioned here as follows

One of the effect of less eating is purity of heart and insight, because, over-eating .۱ and fullness creates a state similar to drunkenness within a human being which slows down his sense of perception, reducing his power of quick grasping, thus, ultimately resulting in his heart's blindness. Opposite to that, hunger results in the mind becoming sharp, bestows comprehension upon conscience, thus, making the heart readied for enlightenment. In this regard the following tradition has been narrated :[from the Holy Prophet [s

Whoever keeps his stomach hungry his thinking culminates to the highest level, thus,“ ”.making his reflections stronger

The other effects of less eating are humility, hospitality, self-breaking, earthiness, .۲ and freedom from arrogance, egotism, and haughtiness, because these are the by-products of transgression, rebellion, and ill-servitude towards Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted). The one who frees himself from these calamities through hunger will also .make himself readied for humility, obedience, and surrender before the Lord

The other effects of less eating are lowering of intensity of sensual passions and .۳ other such motivations which invite a human being towards sinning and other deviations. As we know in most of the cases sins and transgressions are committed as a result of passionate talks and other sensual motivations, therefore, controlling these passions through hunger might free us from getting entrapped into many .dangerous situations

Another effect of less eating is less sleeping, we know that oversleeping is .۴

one of the most important factor of wasting of our age which is the precious sum at our disposal for our hereafter's affairs. But hunger reduces sleep, thus, providing opportunities for night vigil, the source of all blessings and bounties, and helps a human being in worshipping and supplications which is the ladder for his attaining the .(most desirable spiritual station (Maqam al-Mahmud

Another effect of less eating is the ease of worshipping rather servitude, because, .۵ the one who is used to less eating will save a lot of time which otherwise must have been spent for making arrangements, purchasing, cooking, consuming, and relieving, as well as time spent for medical treatment, since in many cases the sickness is the cause of over-eating. Therefore, he will utilize all this available time in worship and servitude; in addition to that he will free himself from the hardships of arranging good foods and medical treatments, which means that he will be having more free time as .well as more ease and comfort

Another effect of less eating is the financial ability of a person to spend for charity, .۶ benevolence, pilgrimage, and other acts of worship which require expenses, because, a lot of expenses spent only for providing unnecessary food items or for medical treatment as a result of over-eating, could be utilized for the above-mentioned worships. The advantages described are so vast in scope that the faculty of reason is .helpless to describe their profundities

,Especially, the prime advantages are purity of heart

sharpness of mind and thinking, because, thinking is tantamount to ultimate result while our other actions and deeds are tantamount to preliminaries. Even thinking or meditating in itself is spiritual journey while the other actions and deeds constitute the preliminaries and background of this spiritual journey. It is in this background that the :narration says

".Meditating for even a single second is better than worshipping for seventy years"

With the above-mentioned introduction we may see the numerous advantages and :important points including

۱. One can discover with certainty that why Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), treats his guests with hunger. Is not hunger is the best means of attaining His knowledge, nearness, and countenance? Are not Allah's knowledge, nearness and countenance ?the most dearest and esteemed things

۲. It also becomes clearly explicit that fasting is not a divine obligation, rather is a invitation for attaining divine ceremonies, whose requirement is a divine Grace bestowed upon us for which we must be thankful to Allah. Awareness of this point :makes clear the divine proclamation in the following verse

"O' ye who believe! Fasting is prescribed for you, even as it was prescribed for those ".(before you, that you may ward off (evil

(Holy Qur'an (۲:۱۸۳ -

is a proclamation, extremely honourable, esteemed, distinguished, and sweet, because, it is an invitation to sit upon the table full of His generosity and to attain the .(sacred spiritual station of His union (wasal) and countenance (laq'a

۳. Realization of the fact that the wisdom behind the indispensability of fasting that is

less eating, is to weaken the sinful sensual passions; therefore, we should not indulge in over-eating and consuming more food than the daily requirements after fast-breaking (iftar), thus, in this manner making the fasting and hunger of the whole day .as useless

Awareness about the merits and advantages of fasting would reveal that in order to .۴ observe it properly with devotion, we must make our best efforts so that we are not .deprived from utilizing its vast benefits

Pondering about the indispensability of fasting would reveal things, which enhance .۵ the value and worth of fasting, things which decrease its worth, and things which contradict and oppose fasting. It is from these considerations that the meanings of :the following tradition can be appreciated, which says

Fasting is not only renunciation of food and drink, while observing fasting your flesh,“ eyes, tongue, and in accordance with certain traditions even skin and hairs must ”.observe fasting and must remain pious and ascetic

The above explanation would also reveal that our aim and objective for fasting .۶ should not be either for the sake of freedom from Hell's punishment or for receiving the bounties of Paradise, even though both of these objectives are achieved through fasting. Rather our aim and intention from fasting should be that this deed would make us closer to Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), thus, helping us attaining union with Him. It would lead a human being farther apart from bodily sensual desires and would make him closer to angelic and spiritual

.virtues

Pondering about the above-mentioned explanation would reveal that, since Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), has invited us for His benevolence, any sort of talk, action, and behavior which would make us farther away from divine presence, would be .indicative of negligence on our part, and would not be complimentary to that

Therefore, from these considerations we should not like and approve it, because, sitting in this state upon the table of blessing of the One who has invited us and is knowledgeable about all our thinking, thoughts, and plans while He is caring about us and we are naive towards Him, He is remembering us while we are negligent towards Him, and He is looking towards us while we are turning our faces away from Him, of course, would be impolite and rude, and no wise person would tolerate such behavior .from any of his friends

But Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), because of His special grace and favours towards His bondsman, has not considered these indecent behaviours and inexcusable negligence as forbidden (haram) and considering this negligence factor, has assigned obligations for His bondman which are far lesser in magnitude than their capacities. For the sake of their ease, have allowed them to observe only parts of obligations as .much as they may, and has overlooked the portions not performed by them

However, on the other hand, His great devoted servants don't allow themselves to behave in this manner with their Lord, rather in every deed whether compulsory or forbidden, act

in a manner which suits with their servitude and bondage as well as is decent enough for the Divinity and Splendour of their Lord, and those who show negligence in this path, and do not care about the rights of their bondage and the divinity of their .creator are regarded by them as damned and destitute

Regarding fasting, what conditions Imam al-Sadiq [a]considers essential for the :authenticity of fasting, some of them would be described here as follows

The fast observer should consider himself as Hereafter's traveller, should remain in“ the state of humility, fear, self-degradation, and like a servant fearing his master, should remain afraid of Allah; his heart should remain pure from defects and contamination, and his inner-self should be free from everything except Allah; must sacrifice his entire friendship and intentions for Him and must purify his heart from all other friendships except Allah's; must surrender his eyes and soul to Him; must commit his soul for His remembrance; must utilize his body in Allah's path and must keep it distant apart especially the tongue from all sorts of sins and indecencies. Whoever has observed these limitations had indeed discharged his obligations of fasting properly, and whoever has shown negligence to discharge these obligations ”.has wasted his fast and would not be benefited from its reward

We must think about musts which Imam al-Sadiq [a] in this narration has considered essential for a fast observer, so that we may appreciate the advantages and blessings incorporated therein. For example, a fast

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Imam al-Sadiq [a] (۸۳/۶۹۹-۱۴۸/۷۶۵): the son of the fifth Imam, he lived in an- ۱ increasingly favourable climate and was able to teach openly in Madina. Large numbers of scholars gathered around him to learn, including such famous Sunni figures as Imam Abu Hanifah, the founder of the one of the four Sunni schools of law. Towards the end of Imam Ja'far's life severe restrictions were placed upon his activities, as a result of growing Shi'ite unrest. More traditions are recorded from him than from all the other Imams together. He is so important for Twelve-Imam Shi'ite

law that it is named the Ja'fari School after him. He is buried in the Baqi Cemetery in Madina. Ja'far's fame for religious learning was great, greater than that of his father or of any other Twelver Imam except for 'Ali bin Abu Talib [a] himself, perhaps the earliest historical reference presenting Ja'far as one of the most respected and highly esteemed personalities of his epoch, and as having profound knowledge and learning, is Ya'qubi's statement that it was customary for scholars who related anything from him to say: "the learned one informed us". Even the famous jurist of Medina, Imam Malik bin Anas, is reported to have said, when quoting Ja'far's traditions: "the Thiqa (truthful) himself told me that..." Similar compliments for Ja'far are attributed to the Imam Imam Abu Hanifah, who is also reported to have been his pupil. Al-Sadiq's [a] knowledge was great in religion and culture, he was fully informed in Philosophy, he attained great piety in the world, and he abstained entirely from lusts. He lived in Madina long enough to greatly profit the sect that followed him, and to give his friends .[the advantage of the hidden sciences [Tr

observer who consider himself as a Hereafter's traveller - a traveller who is nearing his final destination - obviously will not be interested in worldly allurements, and will not pay attention towards anything except collection of provisions for his eternal journey. Or for example, a fast observer who is in a state of humility and heart-brokenness would not be interested in anything, except attaching himself to Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), and would be pleased with His remembrance.

And the fast observer who has surrendered his body and soul absolutely to Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), wouldn't care for anything except Him, inevitably his soul and body, self and conscience, and his entire existence would be filled with Allah's remembrance, love, worship, and servitude. And the fasting of someone like him is the fasting of favourites. (I swear by Allah in the name of His favourite and friends that may He bless us with the grace of undertaking such a fast at least once in lifetime).

۲. Types of Fasting

There are three types of fasting:

۱. The fasting of commons, which is the renunciation of eating and drinking, and observance of other fasting requirements as described in the Books of Jurisprudence.

۲. The fasting of nobles, which in addition to the above also includes renunciation of sins i.e. controlling eyes, ears, tongue, and other bodily parts from sinning and transgression.

۳. The fasting of most distinguished nobles which in addition to the renunciation of the above also includes relinquishment of everything, be it permissible or forbidden, which makes

.mind and conscience negligent from Allah's remembrance

Of course, it must be understood that even the fasting of noble and the fasting of most distinguished notables in itself contains infinite degrees and ranks, i.e. like the believers containing various degrees and ranks in accordance with their piety and asceticism, inevitably their fasting too will differ on the basis of the magnitude of their piety and asceticism. Considering that each believer possesses a particular degree of faith and piety, it could be said that faith, piety, and fasting have as much as ranks and .degrees as there are the number of believers

Classification of Fast observers On the Basis of Their Aims and Intentions .۳

As described earlier that fasting can be classified into three categories in accordance with renunciation of things; on the basis of aims and intentions, fasting may be :classified into five categories as follows

A group of people observe fasting without having particular aim and intention which .۱ could be the basis of correctness of their deeds and accordingly could prevent their deeds from becoming nullified. For example, some might observe fasting, because of fear from the people, or for the sake of their material and worldly benefits, or may observe fasting because of prevailing habits among Muslims. Some observe fasting in order to remain immune from people's persecution as well as not to remain deprived from material gains and advantages obtained through intermingling with the .community

A group of people observe fasting in order to remain immune from peoples . ۲ persecution, as well as not to remain deprived from material advantages obtained through

social intermingling; in order to remain immune from Hell's punishments as well as not .to be deprived from the bounties of Paradise

Another group observe fasting only for the sake of immunity from Hell's . ۳ .punishment, or for utilization of Heavenly bounties, or for the sake of both

Another group observe fasting for the sake of immunity from Hell's punishment as .۴ well as to be blessed with Heavenly bounties, but in addition to that, also to seek .Allah's pleasure and nearness

In the end there is a group who observe fasting and does not have any other . ۵ intention and aim except Allah's pleasure and nearness. They observe fast only in order to become closer to Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), and to attain the position .of His consent

Special Fasting – the Affairs of Allah's Favourite Saints .۴

It has been narrated that fasting carries still further higher ranks, and that is the fasting of those who observe fasting and worship only because they consider, Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), as worthy of worshipping. They do not have any intention and objective in their fasting and worshipping, even the aim and intention of becoming nearer to Him and attaining His pleasure and countenance. They consider even worshipping and fasting with the intention of Allah's countenance and nearness as incomplete, and I myself have seen someone like this who considered such .worships and deeds as worshipping of self or egotism

It seems that their thinking is not acceptable, and I don't believe that there is any prophet, imam, or favourite angel whose deeds and

worships would be based solely upon his belief that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), deserves worshipping and in none of his deeds wouldn't have desired even attaining Allah's nearness and countenance . And if, some of the mystics considered worshipping with the intention of Allah's nearness and attaining His countenance as .self-worshipping or egotism they have acted extravagantly with exaggeration

Of course, it must be understood that occasionally a situation arises for mystics and saints, whereby their worships, actions, and even intentions are not for the sake of attaining Allah's nearness or countenance rather they do it because, they consider Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), as worthy of worshipping. But, I don't believe that continuation of this situation permanently would be possible for any of the prophets .what to say about others

And I don't prefer even worship with this intention, over the worship performed for the sake of attaining Allah's nearness and countenance. How could I prefer such a worship because, I do not know any worship superior than the worship's of the Holy Prophet [s] and Commander of the Faithful Imam 'Ali [a], which in accordance with various traditions, in most of the cases, were performed with the sole intention of .attaining Allah's countenance and pleasure

Even, I can go further deeper and say that it is not far away from reality that maybe some of the times the worships of these nobles might have been performed with the intention of fear from divine punishment. And why shouldn't it be

so? Is it possible that someone's intensity of fear from divine punishment be so (severe that whenever he would think about Hell would result in his fainting?(١)

Then how come such severe fear wouldn't be effective in his actions and worships? I .believe that if such a thing is not impossible, it is far away from being accepted

I may even say that the situations of divine prophets and saints including their Lord and Master the Prophet of Islam differ significantly, and the reason of this difference is due to the respective manifestations of the glory of Allah's sacred names upon them. At times, when the sacred names of Allah's beauty were manifested upon them they become infatuated with His love, sought comfort in His love and affection, behaved like a lover uttering amorous words, did not desire any thing other than Him, and even sometimes behaved in affected manners. And when the sacred divine names of Allah's glory and wrath were manifested upon them they were engulfed with fear and anxiety, trembled and shed tears, recited phrase of repentance upon their tongue, mentioned their humility and neediness, besought him for His forgiveness and pardon, and requested immunity against divine punishments and .Hell's fire

The reason of such manifestations was divine orders and expediency so that these Allah's noble creatures could be trained in this manner, may be promoted to higher Exalted spiritual stations, and could attain His nearness. Yes! The spiritual training and spiritual positions of those noble personalities were in Allah's

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١- Some of the Islamic traditions about some of the Sinless Imams [a] have mentioned .[that while remembering Hell's horrible punishments they fainted, [Author

hand, and He himself with such manifestations has carried them upward towards meaningful perfection and Exalted spiritual positions. Didn't we recite in the comprehensive prayer (Ziyarat al-Jamiah):(1)

"O' my Masters! Allah's with alternative manifestations of fear and hope (i.e. by revealing His wrath, glory, and beauty), has taken over the control of your heart's training and asceticism in His own hands."

Yes! The difference in the lifestyles of divine messengers and saints is a matter, which is confirmed by narrations, and anyone who has undertaken some research about the traditions regarding their biographies would be able to appreciate this matter easily. For example: regarding the Holy Prophet [s] it has been reported in traditions that he sometimes said:

"O' Humera (Ayesha)!"

And called Ayesha for companionship or talking, while on the other hand he kept awaiting for prayer time and said to Bilal:

"Comfort me, O' Bilal! (by calling for prayers)."

Sometimes, when revelation were descended upon him, the colour of his face used to change, even he used to be scared during windstorms fearing divine retributions. Does not this explicitly indicate the variations in the behavior of that noble personality? And if it so, how can it be accepted that in all his worships and obedience he does not have any aim except considering Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), as worthy of worship?

The above discussion proves this point that those who said that - the worship should be performed with the only intention that He (Allah) is worthy of worship - is an statement

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۱ - For Ziyarat al-Jamiah refer to the book Prayers and Supplications selected from

[Mafatih al-Jinan, Zad ul-M'ad and Almanac p. ۶۵۴ [Tr

which cannot be accepted, even if it was uttered by the great scholars and mystics with the exception that, those noble ones, with these words would have pursued a .matter which is in agreement with their intention of achieving Allah's nearness

Because, the aim of attaining nearness of the Supreme Reality or Beloved's countenance could be possible without the heart's infatuation with Paradise or fear from Hell's tortures, rather with the intention of considering Him worthy of worship and, thus, striving towards His nearness. And therefore, performance of worship and deeds with this intention, in itself is an evidence and the meanings of that worship and deed, which has been performed with the sole intention of knowing Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), as worthy of adornment as the Commander of the Faithful :Imam `Ali [a] has said

O' Allah! If I adore you and lower my head in servitude, it is neither because of the" heart's infatuation towards Paradise nor because of fear from Hell's fire, rather I ".worship You because I consider you as worthy of worshipping

The above narration emphasizes the same point because, the noble Imam has placed the worship due to worthiness only in front of worships for the sake of greed or fear and not against all other kind of worships even if performed with the intention of .attaining Allah's nearness and achieving his pleasure

Yes! I beseech Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), to bestow upon me the grace, favour, and strength to worship Him with the intention

of attaining His nearness. Furthermore I ask Him to guide us to understand the correct and proper meanings of His nearness and accordingly should strive towards its attainment, so that we are not included among those who consider His nearness as meaningless and impossible. Didn't some of the exalted scholars and jurisprudents consider, although incorrectly, Allah's nearness as meaningless? And said that intention of Allah's nearness could not mean anything except servitude to His .commands, otherwise it would be in contradiction with Allah's attributes

Also, it should not be forgotten that considering worshipping due to greed or fear as futile, even if these words are uttered by some of the learned scholars and gnostics are undesirable and improper, of course, such negligence and blunders from these noble ones are not in disharmony with their exalted academic and mystical ranks because, Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), in accordance with His wisdom and .expediency makes them entangled into such negligence and stumbles

Also, it must be understood that one of the most famous and learned scholar Sayyid Tawus, in his book Iqbal, has regarded those who worship Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), only due to fear from Hell as low. According to his own explanation, these are the people who did not consider Allah as worthy of worship and if there was no fear of Hell, they would not have worshipped Him at all. Of course, such views as Sayyid Tawus has explained, are not correct and those who possess this thinking are indeed

.low and such Islam and belief are indeed, sick and contaminated

Also, this must be clarified that a sincere devotee does not look towards anything except his beloved, in addition to that from the point of view of tolerance of hardships, performs the hardest worships, as has been narrated from the Commander of the Faithful Imam 'Ali [a] that if there were two deeds carrying the same reward, he would have selected the harder one. These are the real sincere ones, and may Allah bless .them

Classification of Fast observers On the Basis of Their Food Consumption .۵

:From the point of view of eating and drinking the fast observers differ as follows

The fast observers whose eating and drinking is provided through forbidden means are like the ones, who carry the burden of things belonging to others upon their shoulders. The things ultimately reach to their owner and the exhaustion and fatigue remain with these people. The reward of fast of such fast observers is given to the real owners of those eatables or drinks which were illegally consumed by these fast observers, and for them nothing remains except tyranny, wrath, and usurpation of .people's wealth

Or they are like those who undertake pilgrimage to Mecca riding upon an usurped animal, in which case the reward of the Hajj pilgrimage reaches to the owner of that .animal and exhaustion and fatigue remain for the usurper

The fast observers whose eating and drinking consist of doubtful material, (i.e. there being lawful (halal)(۱) or unlawful (haram)(۲) is not confirmed), could be further :classified into two groups

The

۱- Halal: things which are allowable by religious law.[Tr]

۲- Haram: categorically forbidden by religious law [Tr].

first group consists of those fast observers whereby the consumption of such eating .and drinking items apparently is lawful (halal) for them

The second group consists of those whose consumption of such eating and drinking items apparently is not lawful (haram). These people, with slight variation, are similar to those fast observers whose eating and drinking is provided by unlawful (haram) .means

The fast observers whose eating and drinking consist of lawful (halal) means, but are excessive in their consumption in quality as well as in quantity. That is they fill their tablecloth with colourful delicious dishes at dawn (Suhur) and at the time of fast .breaking (iftar), and in their consumption of these foods indulge in over-eating

Their story resembles that of a low ambitious miserly person who in the presence of his beloved amuses himself with something else, while his beloved desires that his lover should pay attention only towards him, and should enjoy his companionship. Such low ambitious miserly ones do not possess the decency and worthiness to be invited for the union with their beloved, they deserve only to be amused in their petty amusements. Because, these are the slaves of their stomachs and not the bondsman of Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted). It would be more appropriate to consider them as .worshippers of belly instead of calling them as Allah's worshippers

The fast observers, who in their qualitative and quantitative consumption of eatables go further deeper as compared to the previous group, reaching to the level of .extravagance

Their situation is similar to those fast observers whose eating and drinking consist of unlawful (haram) means because, lavishness and extravagance is forbidden and is tantamount to a sin. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to consider them as disobedient and sinners, instead of knowing them as obedient bondsman of Allah (the .(Glorious, the Exalted

The fast observers whose eating and drinking as well as their level of consumption .۵ consist of lawful (halal) and is permissible; are not indulged in any sort of waste and extravagance; neither they fill their tablecloth with colourful delicious dishes nor they practice over-eating and belly-filling; limit themselves to consume only a single food and abstain themselves from eating with the intention of enjoyment; Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), will reward them with best of His bounties; with His infinite generosity will bless them, and no one knows or could imagine what sort of special .rewards have been accumulated for them by Him

Classification of Fast observers On the Basis of Eating at Dawn (Suhur) and Fast-.۶ (breaking (Iftar

Fast observers from the point of view of their intention (niyyat) for eating at dawn :(Suhur) and fast breaking (iftar) may be classified as follows

Those who do not make any special intention for eating Suhur and iftar and simply .۱ .eat to enjoy the food taste as well as to make up for the hunger during the fasting

Those who eat Suhur and iftar with the intention of enjoying the food taste and .۲ make up for the hunger, but at the same time with the intention that eating Suhur and iftar are recommended

.mustahab) and help a person in his worshipping)

Those who eat Suhur and iftar because, it is recommended, Allah likes it, and it .۳ helps a person in worshipping, but in addition to that also pay due regard to special etiquette and instructions about Suhur and iftar - etiquette such as recital of Holy Qur'an, engaging in special supplications before, after, and during Suhur and iftar, and .(praising and thanking Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted

(Etiquette of Eating at Dawn (Suhur) and Fast–breaking (Iftar .۷

point

One of the most important etiquette and instruction is the recital of Surah al-Qadr (Power) before taking Suhur and iftar as well as recital of illustrious and illuminated :supplication

(Allahuma rabb al-nur al-'adheem" (Allah is the possessor of great illumination"

which has been given book of Iqbal written by the most esteemed and famous scholar Sayyid ibn Tawus. About this supplication it has been narrated from Imam al-Sadiq [a] that the Holy Prophet [s] has recommended recital of this prayer to Commander of the Faithful [s] Imam 'Ali [a] and said that Archangel Gabriel came to :me and said

Whoever in the Holy Month of Ramadhan before iftar recites this prayer, Allah" answers his prayer, accepts his prayer and fasting, grants his ten requirements, forgives his sins, removes his grief, makes his heart at ease, grants his wishes, makes his deeds to ascend upward with the deeds of prophets and righteous saints, and on the Day of Judgement brings him to His presence with a face illuminated like bright ".moon

Comment

It becomes conspicuous from the narrations that fasting does not mean

only abstinence from eating and drinking rather it also means renunciation of sins. Because, some of the sins like backbiting, lying, lustful sight, cursing, and oppression - be it less or more - would break the fast like the eating and drinking.

Therefore, it is up to the fast observers to abstain from all the above, and during fast must endeavour so that eye, ear, tongue, hands, feet, and other bodily parts all together must observe fasting and should abstain themselves from performance of those acts which should not be performed, even they should avoid over-talking and should practice silence lest their fasting days do not have any difference with other days except eating and drinking, and they should not forget the words of the Holy Prophet [s], who has said:

"Renunciation of eating and drinking is the easiest thing - which has been made compulsory upon the fast observers."

And if, the scholars and jurisprudents consider the fasting of someone who has committed a portion of these sins - as correct, it is from this consideration that what they meant with this correctness of this fast is from the point of view of make up fasting (i.e. for some one, like this, it is not obligatory that after the Holy Month of Ramadhan he must repeat these fasts as makeup fasting).

But what is meant with the correctness of fasting in traditions is - their acceptance by Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted). And in many cases a fast observer may undertake

a fast in such a manner that in accordance with the religious decrees of a jurisprudent it would not be obligatory upon him to offer make-up (qadha) fast, but it may be that .(such fast would not have been acceptable by Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted

The correct and perfect fast which Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), has made obligatory for the self-perfection and spiritual ascent of fast observers, inevitably must be accompanied with abstinence from all bodily sins. Apart from that it would be much better if the fast observer in addition to renunciation of bodily sins should also practice abstinence from sins of the heart, i.e. should prevent the heart from any other remembrance except Allah's, and should renounce everything except Allah .which is the most superior and esteemed fast

Some one who has truly discovered the reality, virtues, and wisdom of fasting inevitably should abstain from all sort of sins and transgression for the sake of fast's acceptance, otherwise on the Judgement Day he would be questioned why his eyes, ears, tongue, and other bodily parts did not observe fasting? And simply quitting eating and drinking which would relieve him from undertaking make-up fasting (qadha) in this world, would not make him immune from scrutiny and Allah's .punishment on the Judgement Day

Some Special Distinctions of the Holy Month of Ramadhan

point

Regarding special distinctions of the Holy Month of Ramadhan and spread of Allah's blessings during this month, a lot of important points have been mentioned in narrations - the points which could be useful and constructive

for those who possess an enlightened heart and sense of understanding. Following is :a brief description of those narrations

Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), pardons seventy million people, who are being .١ punished in the Hell, at the time of Fast-breaking (iftar) during each night of the Holy Month of Ramadhan, and at the end of the Holy Month forgives an additional number .of sinners equivalent to the total sum of those pardoned during the entire month

On the first night of the Holy Month of Ramadhan, Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), .٢ pardons whoever he pleases, and during each night pardons twice the number pardoned in the previous night, and on the last night, forgives twice the number of .sinners pardon during entire month

In this regard, the most famous tradition is the sermon of the Holy Prophet [s] which .٣ has been reported by Sayyid Ibn Tawus in his book Iqbal, quoted from Imam al-Ridha [a](١) who heard from his father, who quoted from the Commander of the Faithful :Imam 'Ali [a] who said

One day the Holy Prophet [s] delivered the following sermon about the Holy Month of" Ramadhan: O' people! The Month of Allah with blessing mercy and pardon has came to you, a month which is the best month among all months before Allah; its days are the best days; its nights are the best nights and its hours are the best hours. It is the ,month in which you have been invited by the Lord for a feast

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Imam al-Ridha [a]: (١۴٨-٧۶۵-٢٠٣/٨١٧),the son of the seventh Imam, he lived in a - ١ period when the Abbasids were faced with increasing difficulties because of Shi'ite revolts. Finally the Caliph al-Ma'mun thought he would solve the problem by naming the Imam as his own successor, hoping thus to ensnare him in worldly affairs and turn the devotion of his followers away from him. After finally being able to persuade al-Ridha [a] to accept, al-Ma'mun realized his mistake, for Shi'ism began to spread even more rapidly. Finally he is said to have had the Imam poisoned. He is buried in .[Mashhad in Iran [Tr

and have been selected as the recipient of this special favour. Your breathing merits the reward of praise, while your sleeping in this month earns the reward of worship. .In this month your deeds are accepted and prayers are granted

Therefore, with true intention and pure hearts beseech the Lord to bestow upon you His special favour to be able to observe fasting and recite the Holy Qur'an. Because the most unfortunate and wretched one is the one who remains deprived from Allah's pardon during this great month. With your thirst and hunger remind yourself about the thirst and hunger of the Day of Judgement; pay charity to poor and destitute people, pay respect to elders; be kind towards youngsters, and observe the bonds of .relationship with your kith and kin

Watch your tongues, cover your eyes from seeing forbidden objects and prevent" your ears from hearing forbidden affairs. Be kind to the orphans of the people so that the others are kind towards your orphans. Repent for your sins and at the time of prayer raise your hands upward, because these hours are the best hours in which Allah looks towards mankind with mercy and compassion. Their hymns are granted, their cries are heard. Whatever they ask is bestowed upon them and their prayers are .fulfilled

O' people! Your selves are mortgaged against your deeds and therefore, by means of" repentance make yourself free. Your back has become much too heavy due to sins; .by prolongation of your prostration make yourself light-burdened

Know that Allah has taken the oath of his Majesty and Splendour that he will not punish those who offer prayers and bow down in prostration, and on the Day of Judgement will not scare them through Hell's fire.

O' people! Whoever in this month will make arrangements for the fast-breaking" (iftar) of a believer will be bestowed upon the reward equal to freeing of a slave and all of his past sins shall be pardoned. He was asked: 'O' Prophet of Allah! But all of us are not in a position to arrange the fast-breaking of a fast observer.' The Prophet replied: 'Protect yourself from Hell-Fire and offer fast-breaking even if it happens to be a piece of date with a glass of sherbet.'

O' people! Whoever makes his conduct better in this month on the Judgement Day" will be bestowed upon the permit for crossing over the Serat. Whoever will open the knots of difficulties of people's affairs in this month, the Lord on the Judgement Day will make the accounting of his deeds easier.

Whoever makes people immune from his mischief, Allah on the Judgement Day will" make him immune from his wrath. Whoever treats an orphan with respect, on the Judgement Day Allah will treat him with honour. Whoever takes care to strengthen family bonds with relatives, Allah will extend His blessings upon him on the Judgement Day, and whoever will cut off his family ties, Allah too will deprive him from His blessings on the Judgement Day.

Whoever offers"

supererogatory prayers in this month, Allah will register for him immunity from the fire. Whoever performs a compulsory deed in this month, will be bestowed the reward of seventy compulsory deeds performed in other months. Whoever offers a lot of salutations upon me in this month, on the Judgement Day, Allah will make the balance of his righteous deeds heavier. Whoever recites one single verse of the Holy Qur'an during this month will be bestowed the reward of finishing the entire Holy Qur'an in .other months

O' people! The gates of Paradise are opened in this month, beseech Allah that it" should not be closed upon you. The doors of Hell are closed, and ask Allah that they are not opened upon you. The devils are chained in this month, ask Allah not to allow .them to take over your control

Imam 'Ali [a] said: 'O' Prophet of Allah which one is the best deed during this month?' The Holy Prophet [s] replied: 'O' Abul Hasan! The most supreme deed in this month is piety and renunciation of divine forbidden acts', then the Holy Prophet [s] cried. 'O' Prophet of Allah! What has caused you to cry?' Asked Imam 'Ali [a]. 'O' 'Ali! What would happen to you during this month. As I can see you standing in prayer whispering with your Lord, the most wretched person comes and with a heavy blow of his sword '.makes your beard coloured with your blood

O' Prophet of Allah! Would I be steadfast upon my'

religion on that day?' Asked Imam 'Ali [a] 'Yes! You would be steadfast on your faith.' Said the Holy Prophet [s]. Then he said: 'O' 'Ali! Whoever would kill you, would kill me; whoever would engage in ill-speaking against you would vilify me, because, you are from me; your soul is my soul; your nature is my nature; Allah has created, me and ;you

He has bestowed exaltedness upon me and you - prophethood (nabuwwat) for me, and vicegerency (imamat) for you; whoever has not accepted your vicegerency has not believed in my prophethood either; O' 'Ali you are my executor and successor, you are the father of my children, you are the husband of my daughter; you are the caliph of my community (ummah)(١) during my lifetime as well as after my demise; your orders are my orders; your prohibition is my prohibition; I swear to Allah who has bestowed upon me prophethood and made me His most distinguished servant that you are Allah's proof upon His creatures; you are the trustee of His secrets; Allah's ".vicegerent (caliph) upon His bondsman

The most important and explicit tradition about this month is prophet's cursing for .۴ someone who did nothing for his own forgiveness while the entire Holy Month passed :away. The Holy Prophet has said

May Allah never forgive someone who spent the entire Holy Month without being" ".able to receive forgiveness

Comments

As far as the Holy Prophet [s] himself is a source of mercy and favour for the people, and is

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.[Ummah: The entire Islamic community without territorial or ethnic distinction [Tr -١

blessing for the humanity, he will never curse a Muslim even if he happens to be a sinner. Therefore, it must be said that with this curse the Prophet desired to give the .good tidings of Allah's blessing and abundance of His favours during this Holy Month

۵. The most important and hopeful traditions which have been narrated about this month - are plenty of narrations about chaining of devils, closing of Hell's doors, opening of Paradise gates and Allah's proclaimer announcing the open invitation for the people from the beginning till the end of month. Such special distinctions from the beginning till the end of month have not been mentioned for any other month. In other months only the last one third nights possess such special merits except Friday nights - all of them possess merits, as well as the Holy Month of Rajab all of whose .nights possess such merits

۶. Some other samples of hopeful narrations about this month are the narrations which indicate the special merit of this month is the acceptance of prayers by Allah :(the Glorious, the Exalted), as the Holy Qur'an says

".Beseech Me so that I may grant your wishes"

.(Holy Qur'an (۱۵:۶۰ -

After referring to some of the above-mentioned traditions, here it must be added that the points emphasized therein possess higher exalted distinctions, and those who are worthy and knowledgeable recognise these distinctions as well as know that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), in this manner, has bestowed upon us what sort of great

favours. From this aspect happy, pleased, and with joyful heart accept them, thank and praise Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), for His love and compassion, and thus in this manner get benefited from these things. But the negligent and the deniers in proportion to the degree of their negligence, denial, and thanklessness might be .benefited a little or not at all

Comment

It has been said that some people do not consider chaining of devils during this month as very effective. Maybe the acceptance of fastening of devils was difficult for them, or they did not appreciate its meanings correctly, even though the effect of fastening of devils during this month is quite explicit; the worshipping and obedience during this month become significantly effective, the good deeds become more, the number of sinful and evil deeds diminish, which all together indicates the result of fastening of .devils

And the one who knows the reality of Satan and his tactics and tricks upon human beings, should appreciate that this very abstinence from eating and drinking, especially if accompanied with abstinence from over-talking, prevents a fast observer's heart from Satanic influences, the point which has been emphasized in the :following narration

".Stop the path of Satanic influence upon your self through hunger"

Yes! This tremendous increase in worship and good deeds of people during the Holy Month of Ramadhan in itself is an explicit and undeniable indication of fastening of devils. Of course, those who are knowledgeable know that this fastening of devils does not applies to

fastening of all the devils. This point has also been explained in the traditions whereby .the fastening of devils has been referred especially for the most rebellious devils

A Few Reminders

We know that in this month Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), has bestowed His blessing upon us, has invited us to His table of benevolence and compassion. Here I would like to add that in accordance of the decree of Sharia,(۱) wisdom, and common practice when the breeze of Allah's love and mercy blows, all are obliged that for the sake of achieving His nearness and consent, must accept it with thanks and pleasure and must present themselves as obedient servants, or at least in a decent manner with pleasing words, must respond to the Proclaimer of the Holy Month - the angel who invites people to divine feast and gives them glad tidings of Allah's blessing and forgiveness. And in this reply must indicate their thanks, appreciation, and .indebtedness and should ask Allah's pardon for their negligence and omissions

And it would be much better if they consider the Proclaimer Angel of the Month as the messenger from the Emperor, who has came before them to extend an invitation to the Emperor's feast, as well as to give them the glad-tidings that how much the Emperor likes and desires them, what sort of gifts, rewards, and precious robes he has stored for them, and even has called them for a private union with him so that they could become His friends, confidants and

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۱- Sharia: The all embracing law of Islam derived from the Qur'an, the normative practice and authoritative pronouncements of the Prophet [s], and a number of .[secondary sources [Tr

companions. Then they should think that if really such a royal herald would have brought royal invitation for them, wouldn't they had accepted it with a lot of enthusiasm and excitement? And in order to accomplish it, wouldn't they have ?sacrificed everything belonging to them

Therefore, think about the Majesty, Splendour and Glory of the Lord, who is the King of all the kings, and must remember about all that love and favours towards us, in order to appreciate how to respond to His invitation. I have earlier explained(۱) in the etiquette of the Holy Month of Rajab as how to respond to the call of Lord's messenger. The same reply should be recited for the Holy Month of Ramadhan with some minor variation . And it would be better if this reply should be recited on the first night at the beginning of the Holy Month as well as should be recited at some other .special timings

Granting of servant's prayers and acceptance of their wishes is another breeze which breezes during this month, and it is up to us to be benefited and positioning our self across the blowing direction, by engaging in prayers and supplications as much as possible whether be prayers of our own or the prayer recited through the tongue of Sinless Imams of the Prophet's Holy Progeny - Ahlul-Bait [a], i.e., recital of prayers .which have been reported as compiled by those noble ones

,Also it would be appropriate if we must ponder and take a penetrating

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۱- The author is referring to etiquette of the Holy Month of Rajab in his original text, [which has not been translated into English as yet [Tr

benevolent look regarding the Qur'anic verses which have been revealed in this :context such as

".My Lord wouldn't concern Himself with you but for your prayer"

.(Holy Qur'an (۲۵:۷۷ -

Pray unto Me and I will hear your prayer. Lo! Those who scorn My service, they, will" ".enter Hell, disgraced

.(Holy Qur'an (۴۰:۶۰ -

And when My servants question thee concerning Me, then surely I am nigh. I answer" the prayer of the supplicant when he crieth unto me. So let them hear my call and let ".them trust in me in order that they may be led aright

.(Holy Qur'an (۲:۱۸۶ -

Is not He (best) who answerth the wronged one when he crieth unto Him and" ".removeth the evil

.(Holy Qur'an (۲۷:۶۲ -

"!If only, when our disaster came on them, they had been humble"

.(Holy Qur'an (۶:۴۳ -

".Ask Allah of His bounty. Lo! Allah is Ever Knower of all things"

.(Holy Qur'an (۴:۳۲ -

[The Splendour and Eminence of Supplications Compiled by the Ahlul-Bait [a

point

Also, it would be appropriate to ponder about the narrations regarding supplications, as well as to think about the ways and manners of supplications as practised by the sinless Imams [a]; must take a profound look at the exalted themes and subtle

meanings which are contained in the supplications compiled by those honourable ones. In order to discover that whatever these impeccable ones have incorporated in their supplications regarding Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), His Sacred Names, Characteristics, Glory, and Splendour is far deeper than what could be imagined by .human thinking and comprehension

One will discover what sort of beauty and elegance

have been shown by them in their etiquette of servanthood; what have been uttered by them regarding the Splendour and Glory of Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted); in what pleasing manners they had asked him for forgiveness and blessings, and by what excuses had pleaded Him for bestowing His love, mercy, benevolence and ?blessings

I can swear to my own soul that these exalted themes and sweet pleasing manners of these supplications, are the most explicit manifestation of miracle, proving the authenticity of divine mission of these sinless Imams [a]. And the one who possesses some sense of thinking and some degree of understanding in his heart, if will ponder about these supplications, would certainly accept their vicegerency (Imamat) without .requiring any further proof and miracle

And the one who desires to appreciate more about the splendour, eminence, and sweetness of these supplication should engage himself in supplications; without copying from their supplications should compile his own prayer; then he should compare it with the supplications of those noble ones, in order to discover the limits of .variation between his own and theirs

Yes! The aware and enlightened ones who dare to swim in this fathomless ocean of these supplications and with a penetrating eye ponder about their profundities will discover that what sort of learning and sublime realities, to the extent of miracles .[have been incorporated in their supplications by the sinless Imams [a

I myself have not seen even one tenth, rather one hundredth of realities and learning (which have been

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Imamat: The position of leadership in religious and civil matters in the Islamic - ۱ society is known as the Imamate, and its holder is known as the Imam. It is the belief of Shi'i Muslims that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), must have designated an Imam for the people after the death of the Most Noble Messenger [s] to uphold the culture and laws of the religion and to guide people on the way of truth. The term Imam as

used in a technical sense in Shi'ism differs from the general usage of the term in Arabic, where it means "leader" or in Sunni political theory where it means the caliph himself. As used technically in Shi'ism the term refers to the person who contains within himself the "Muhammadan Light" which was handed down through Fatimah al-Zahra [a] the daughter of the Blessed Prophet [s], and 'Ali [a], the first Imam, to the others, terminating with the Hidden Imam who is to appear again one day as the Mahdi. As a result of the presence of this light, the Imam is considered to be "Sinless" and to possess perfect knowledge of the esoteric as well as the exoteric order. The Imams are like a chain of light issuing forth from the "Sun of Prophecy" which is their origin, and yet they are never separated from that Sun. Whatever is said by them emanates from the same inviolable treasury of inspired wisdom. Since they are an extension of the inner reality of the Blessed Prophet [s], their words really go back to him. That is why their sayings are seen in the Shi'ite perspective as an extension of the prophetic Hadith, just as the light of their being is seen as a continuation of the prophetic light. In Shi'ite eyes, the temporal separation of the Imams from the Blessed Prophet [s] does not at all affect their essential and inner bond with him or the continuity of the "Prophetic-light" which is the source of his as well as their inspired knowledge [Tr].

incorporated in these supplications), in other speeches of those noble ones, even did not find them in narrations and lengthy sermons. (Of course, with the exception of some narrations which deal with communications with Allah, monotheism, praise, and .(worship

The mystery of this variation could be that those honourable ones in their narrations had spoken with the people while in their supplications and hymns have spoken with Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted). Obviously, the degree of speech, its culmination, and descent depends upon the degree of intelligence and comprehension of the addressee; the delicate and sensitive points which are spoken before an aware and knowledgeable addressee are not spoken before some one who lacks these .characteristics

Yes! These supplications, reached to us through Sinless Imams of the Prophet's Ahlul-Bait [a] as though form the complete reflection, or echo of whatever is contained in the Holy Qur'an. Or in other words these supplications constitute on Ascending-Qur'an in front of a Descending-Qur'an. The later is the holy scripture which was revealed by Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), to his esteemed servant - Prophet Muhammad [s], while the former constitutes the Qur'an from Allah's most distinguished servants, ascending upward towards Him. While the Qur'an is Allah's communications and candid words with his esteemed servants; these supplications are a communication of Allah's esteemed servant with Him, and this matter is not accepted and comprehended by any one, except a small number of believers who are .thoroughly familiar and enlightened

Also, it should be emphasized that the sinless

Imams [a] through these supplications have done a great favour to us by leaving such precious souvenirs – the souvenirs and blessings, for which we are helpless to thank; it is our obligation to appreciate their worth; in our actions must utilize the etiquette and proper manners as recommended by them; and must try with best of our abilities .lest we act as unthankful and unappreciative of truth

Etiquette of the Holy Qur'an and Supplications .۱

As far as the Holy Month of Ramadhan is a month of Qur'an and supplications, it will be appropriate to include some of the instructions and etiquette of recital of the Holy Qur'an and supplications leaving details at their own place, and since the Holy Qur'an has priority and preference over supplications, firstly the etiquette of Qur'anic recital :shall be explained

Etiquette of Recital of the Holy Qur'an .۲

:As Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), has said in the following verse

".Will they then not meditate on the Qur'an, or are there locks on the hearts"

.(Holy Qur'an (۴۷:۲۴ –

Those who do not ponder over the Holy Qur'an have been reprimanded severely. The first and important instruction and etiquette of Qur'anic recital is deliberation and pondering of the recited verse, because whoever will recite the Holy Qur'an with deliberations inevitably with discover the splendour and majesty of Qur'an and its .bearer, and its meanings and contents to the extent of his deliberation and pondering

And this awareness and understanding will become a cause which would enable him to keep his mind and conscience away from scattered thinking during recital; thus, increasing understanding about the meanings

and objectives of the Holy Qur'an in his deliberations. He should renounce whatever acts as obstacles in closing the path of understanding, and whatever positive and negative commands, advice, and exhortations are encountered by him must regards .them as though all of them have been revealed especially for him

It is at this injunctive that deliberations and pondering about the Holy Qur'an will have influence upon him and would excite his mind and soul and it is after this experience that he will find access inside the worlds of beauty and illumination, thus, ascending towards higher spiritual positions. These are some of the instructions and etiquette of recital of the Holy Qur'an, some of them are mandatory while others if not compulsory .are indeed precious and esteemed

Understanding of Meanings of the Holy Qur'an .۳

About the understanding of Meanings of the Holy Qur'an, in a nutshell it may be said that it should be understood that the reality of Qur'an is something behind these phrases written on the paper, seen by our eyes, recited by the tongue, and heard by the ears; it is a light from Allah's celestial illumination, which has reflection, glory, and manifestation for all the worlds of existence, whose every reflection and .manifestation contain special effects

In the Hereafter, it will be manifested in a form similar to the faces of prophets, angels, and favourite saints, would speak in the same form and would intercede before Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted). In summary it is a glory from Allah's Glories and a manifestation from Allah's

Manifestations. (These are the points which have been emphasized in the traditions of sinless Imams [a] - who themselves are the guardian, companion, and equivalent of the Holy Qur'an). In some aspects, as is evident from the following quotations from :[the Commander of the Faithful Imam 'Ali [a

".I am the speaking Qur'an"

The reality of Qur'an is similar to the reality of the existence of the Holy Prophet [s] and the sinless Imams [a] of his Ahlul-Bait. Yes! The Holy Qur'an possesses a reality so much higher and exalted which cannot be reached through our limited and insignificant amount of knowledge, as Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), Himself has :mentioned in the Holy Qur'an

".Which none toucheth save the purified"

.(Holy Qur'an (۵۶:۷۹ -

Since, the understanding of Qur'an's reality, would lead to the understanding of its grandeur, understanding of its grandeur will manifest the Splendour and Majesty of its Descender (i.e. Allah); the one who will comprehend all the above, will keep his mind free from all sorts of scattered thoughts during recital of the Holy Qur'an, will ponder and deliberate about the meaning of each phrase and sentence in order to discover their meanings and goals; and the one who will do so, will earn plenty of goodness and a lot of advantage. He would acquire plenty of knowledge because the Holy Qur'an is an illumination which takes out its followers from the darkness and thus, leading them towards light, Allah's pleasure, and straight path of belief and mysticism. As the Holy

:Qur'an describes it

".The scripture which is an exposition, to all things"

.(Holy Qur'an (۱۶:۸۹ -

:And said

"Not a leaf falleth but He knoweth it, not a grain amid the darkness of the earth, naught of wet or dry, but (it is noted) in a clear record."

.(Holy Qur'an (۶:۵۹ -

How to Think and Deliberate Over the Holy Qur'an ۴

It would be appropriate to present an example for showing the method of deliberation over the Qur'an and understanding its meaning. For example, someone :who recites the following verse

"?Have you observed the water which ye drink"

.(Holy Qur'an (۵۶:۶۸ -

Should not limit himself only to think about the phrase water and its apparent meanings and taste, rather should ponder about it from various dimensions. For example: He should pause and think all the plants of various colours, different species of animals which are found in this world all have been created by this water. He must think about the human being who has been created with water; in addition to his having apparent visible capabilities such as eyes, ears, and tongue also possesses inner-self and strange inner-power so much astonishing that it could help ascend him .towards the most higher sublime spiritual stations

He must ponder that this same man created by water possesses an inner-self so marvellous, astonishing, and vast as though the entire world of creation has been miniatured in his inner-self; it is from this consideration that he is regarded as a separate entity called a smaller-world (jahan al-asghar) as compared to the world of

creation which is called the greater-world (jahan

al-akbar). And in accordance to a more delicate and sophisticated interpretation a human being represents a greater-world as compared to the world of creation being .a smaller-world

Then he must ponder that the water which is needed by all the plants, animals, and human beings, in itself, as told in the Holy Qur'an is a manifestation of Allah's blessing. Further he should think that Allah's blessing is His characteristic which cannot be separated from His Holy Essence, which would make him aware that Allah is the fountain-head and source of all things. Such deliberations are the basis and background of attaining spiritual contemplation (shahud)(١) and I believe that whoever will deliberate about every thing in this manner, would be able to test the following tradition narrated by Imam al-Sadiq [a] and its truth would become explicitly .clear

".I never saw a thing but saw Allah, before, after, and with it"

Another method which should be mentioned is that: it would be appropriate if the reciter of the holy scripture should deliberate and pause more and more in order to comprehend the meanings and objectives of this great heavenly book more :profoundly as follows

A. One of the method is to deliberate about the lifestyles of prophets. We know that those noble ones in spite of possessing all those sublime spiritual positions and Allah's nearness were inflicted with severe hardships and difficulties in their personal lives. On the one hand they were inflicted with hardships like poverty and sicknesses, while on the other hand they

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١ - shahud: the witnessing of Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), that excludes any awareness of self and that takes place through the agency of Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), himself, not by means of any organ or vision, whether outer or inner [Tr.].

were confronted with severe enmity and assaults from their enemies, who not only persecuted them through cursing, slandering, and impeaching but also tortured and even executed. And in this manner Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), trained them through infliction of different types of calamities, to the extent that their leader who :was the beloved and most dearest of Allah had to say

".None of the prophet was tortured and suffered like me"

If, the reciter of the Holy Qur'an ponders about the suffering and torture of the divine :prophets, he will discover the following constructive points

that the Majesty, Splendour, and Magnanimity of Allah are so great that noble • personalities of prophets in spite of their possessing all that dignity and grandeur are .humbled before the divine will and wisdom and no one could dare to criticise Him

that because of obedience and worship (offered by him) should not expect that Allah • (the Glorious, the Exalted), will do things according to his desire, or worst than that he .(might expect such a thing compulsory upon Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted

that if he is inflicted with poverty, diseases, and other hardships in his life, he should • .never feel hopeless from receiving Allah's blessings and favours

that one should never reprimand a believer because of being inflicted with • .calamities

that one should never regard a believer as insignificant, because, of his being in a • state of poverty and possessing nothing; may be his poverty and destitution could be an indication of his greatness

.(karamat)

- that the world is quite insignificant and worthless before Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), and accordingly he too should not regard the world as great and should .never feel sorry and unhappy from loosing it

- that inclination of world towards a person will be indication of his being distant from the privileged spiritual station of Allah's nearness, and world's disinclination towards a person would be an indication of his righteousness and salvation, as it was revealed to :[Prophet Moses [a

Whenever poverty comes to you say: O' the indication of righteous ones welcome!“ And whenever wealth approaches you say: the penalty of sins has arrived before their ”.commitment

B. The other examples upon which he must deliberate are the penalties, punishment, and divine limits which have been prescribed in the holy scripture and shari'a for the sinners. For example, he must ponder that the divine punishment for theft of even .one fourth Dinar - which apparently is an insignificant sin - is cutting of hand

Therefore, he will realize how much Allah's wrath and punishments, transgression against Allah's commands through indulgence into major sins would bring. And therefore, this deliberation would become the basis for causing his heart fearful of divine wrath and severe punishments, thus, in order to keep himself immune from them would be mindful of his speaking and other actions; will try to abstain himself .from the heart's and tongue's sins which are committed by human beings every day

C. Another example which must be pondered by reader of

the holy scripture is the life histories and deeds of past generations, who were :destroyed because of divine wrath. Prophet Jesus [a] asked one of them

For which of your deed you have been tormented with such horrible punishment? He“ replied: 'we loved the world like a child who loves his mother, followed the sinners, had little fear and lot of big desires and spent our lives negligently by indulging into worldly amusements.' Prophet Jesus asked: 'What was their punishment and destruction?' 'In the evening they went to their comfortable beds and were struck by divine wrath', he replied. 'What was it?' the Prophet asked. 'The fountains of Hell-Fire .which engulfed us till the Day of Judgement.' He replied

Prophet Jesus [a] asked: 'What did you say and hear?' 'We said, if you return us to the world, we will become righteous and pious and were told that you are liars', was the reply. When asked: 'How come no one else except you respond to me?' 'The angels of divine wrath and punishment closed their mouths with Hell-Fire, and therefore they were not in a position to open their mouths; and the reason that I am in a position to speak is - that I did not belong to them and was not with them, but since I was among them when divine torment struck them, it also engulfed me; right now, I am sitting at the brink of Hell and don't know what would happen? Whether I will fall inside

".it or would be rescued?' he replied

Therefore, we must ponder about their affairs and must learn a lesson from them. For example, one of the past nation (ummah) whose fate is a warning are the "Saturday (sabbath)" companions (Ashab al-Sabt) whose faces, were changed as pigs and monkeys, and were destroyed on account of divine wrath and punishment. The one who recites their story in the Holy Qur'an after pondering about their fate must pause and think about his own affairs, lest his own actions and deeds might be similar to .theirs

Yes! Such deliberations and pondering were responsible for taking away comfort and sleep from the eyes of gnostics and righteous ones, and caused them to recite the :following slogan

How can one who is not immune from his tomorrow, sleep comfortably; one who" does not know about his condition the very next morning". These thoughts forced them to look into the mirror repeatedly every day, lest their face might have became .blackened, or metamorphosed due to their sins

Obstacles in Qur'an's Understanding .۵

The reciter of the Holy Qur'an in order to have more and better understanding of its objectives in addition to above-mentioned deliberations should also endeavour to remove the obstacles which prevent its understanding. Otherwise, not only would they not be benefited from its recital, on the contrary might suffer even losses. Some :of the obstacles which might prevent Qur'an's understanding may be listed as follows

It has been said that extreme precaution about the grammar and too much emphasis that all the words should

be pronounced correctly with precision is something which closes the path of deliberation and pondering which is a means of understanding Qur'anic objectives, .thus, preventing the reciter from discovering the aims of the holy scripture

Some of the abject and low characteristics and filthy habits which results in heart's blackening also make the mind and conscience incompetent to comprehend Qur'anic meanings and objectives. This point has been mentioned in the following verse of the :Holy Qur'an

".Thus doth Allah print on every arrogant, disdainful heart"

.(Holy Qur'an (۱۵:۳۵ –

It means that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), has sealed the hearts of tyrants and arrogant people who look upon others in a degrading manner, and therefore, the path of understanding the realities has been closed for them. Or, in verses of the Holy Qur'an it has been emphasized that comprehension and realization of realities belong especially for those who restrain themselves from sins, and trust in Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted). Yes! Just like the rust makes a mirror dark and unusable, similarly such sins make the heart rusted and thus, unable to comprehend the .realities

To consider fallacies as true religion and to take position on the basis of that prejudice, and rejecting everything as null and void except his own false belief also closes the path of Qur'anic comprehension. Because very often it might happen that during Qur'anic recitation, some of its realities may be manifested for the reciter, ,thus, the truth becoming apparent for him, but he did not accept it, because

of its being in contradiction with his imaginations and beliefs. Or, he may interpret and explain them in a manner whereby these manifestation will become harmonious with his fallacies. Such individuals too would remain unable to discover the Qur'anic .realities except that they should clean themselves from those fallacies

Limiting the meanings and aims of the Holy Qur'an to their apparent and exoteric interpretation and treating their commentary (tafsir) and esoteric meanings (tawil) as false also closes the path of Qur'anic understanding and comprehension, thus, .making him deprived from the blessing of discovering the truth

The one who wants to discover the grandeur and reality of the Holy Qur'an should read it with deliberations as well as should keep himself distant from the obstacles which prevent him from comprehension of its realities. In proportion to his spiritual perfection and attainment of higher sublime positions, the Qur'anic realities and divine learning will become manifested upon him; his soul would be able to quench his thirst from the drink poured by the Glorious Cup, thus, becoming intoxicated with the .(joy of attaining spiritual contemplation (shahud

It is at this injuncture that his heart would accept various reflections of Qur'anic verses in accordance with their meanings and intentions, and each verse in proportion to his desires and understanding will produce a special joy and ecstasy within his heart. Because in that situation he would feel that every Qur'anic verse has been revealed for his condition, especially for him and addressed to him. It is from this

consideration that during recital of Qur'anic verses in accordance with their meanings and realities, each verse will produce different states in his heart like joy, grief, fear, .hope, trust, obedience, consent, and Monotheism (Tawhid) etc

And those conditions will initiate a relevant response such as, to seek forgiveness, admittance of guilt, repentance, supplication, thanks, praise, and recital of 'Allah is Great', or 'There is no god but Allah,' at the completion of each verse. For example, when he will be overtaken by fear, he would not find himself in a position to request from Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), the rewards and eternal blessings which have been promised in the Qur'anic verses for His righteous servants, instead he would complain about his own calamity and misfortune by seeking refuge in Allah (the .(Glorious, the Exalted

While at other times, when the state of hope will overtake him, with a heart saturated with an ardent desire and curiosity, he will beseech Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), to bestow upon him the exalted spiritual stations, especially reserved for His most .favourite righteous gnostics, whereby he could enjoy their enlightened company

Yes! If the above stages took control of him with perfection (i.e. without least doubt about Allah's bounties and blessings of revelation), it would become clearly manifested upon him and would ascend him to such higher sublime spiritual limits, that in the recital of Qur'anic verses, he would realize and would be able to see, through the heart's esoteric eyes that Allah is speaking to

.him with love and compassion, and invites and whispers to him with affection

Here his condition would resemble that of someone who is standing in the presence of an elderly personality in a state mixed with shame and humility hearing his words with sincerity and complete devotion. In case, if he thanked this great blessing with sincerity and accepted the breezing of this breeze in a manner, it deserves to be, then Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), too would increase His goodness and affection for him, thus, ascending him higher and higher towards exalted spiritual stations, so that he would be able to contemplate spiritually the writer in writings; the speaker in speech; the characteristics in sentences; and facts and realities in phrases. In this background Sheikh Saduq (R.A.) in his (Tawhid) (١) has narrated a tradition from Imam :al-Sadiq [a] as follows

Allah has manifested himself to his servants through His words but they do not see" ".him

Here it is that he will forget himself, his Qur'anic recital, all other affairs, and will concentrate all his energy and endeavours to see the Speaker - the Speaker who has revealed Himself to him through His words. (I pray to Allah by all pious, immaculate, (.and near ones to bestow upon us such an exalted spiritual station

Etiquette and Codes of Prayer

point

In accordance with the faculty of reason and on the basis of Islamic traditions, prayer too has its etiquette and codes; some of them will be described here, but firstly it would be appropriate to describe

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.[Tawhid: Divine Unity or Monotheism [Tr -١

:the realities of prayer as follows

?What is Prayer, and What it Ought to Be .۱

The literary meanings of phrase prayer means requesting in a humble manner. A little :pondering about this definition would reveal

Because the reality of prayer is requesting and beseeching – an act of the heart and that is internal – therefore, a prayer which does not come out from the heart or in .other words from a negligent heart in reality, is not a prayer

Because prayer is a request in a state of need with humility and is not like other requests or demands; therefore, a prayer or request which is not accompanied by .need and humility too will be far away from the reality of prayer

Since the request and pleading inevitably should be accompanied by hope, it must be understood that hope is an essential part of a prayer; therefore, a prayer which is not accompanied by hope or is accompanied by hopelessness will not be regarded as real .prayer

Since for acceptance of prayer and fulfilment of wants one may trust only someone Who knows about our genuine wants as well possesses the power of their being materialized, therefore, the supplicant must have firm faith in the knowledge and power of Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), to whom he is beseeching for fulfilment of his own needs through prayer; a firm faith about His knowledge and wisdom as .regard to his needs; as well as His absolute power and authority to grant them

Since humility and humbleness in front of elderly personalities differ in accordance with

their status, i.e. it may be that what is considered as humility and humbleness in front of a certain respectful personality may not be regarded sufficient in front of a very great respectable personality. And since Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), happens to be Greater than all the great personalities, therefore, one should do his utmost to show his humility and humbleness in front of Him. Because requesting and pleading before such a Magnanimous and Glorious Lord without his permission and consent would be impolite and stubbornness, which is in contradiction with obedience and .humility

Therefore, request from Him should not be without His permission; because of His Love and Benevolence towards His creatures, He had given us such a permission, and has asked us to present our requirements and needs at His threshold, and beseech :Him for their grant as the Holy Qur'an says in the following verse

And when My servants question thee concerning Me, then surely I am nigh. I answer" the prayer of the supplicant when he cryeth unto Me. So let them hear My call and let ".them trust in Me

- ۲:۱۸۶) Holy Qur'an).

Since requesting or begging in reality couldn't be anything other than goodness and blessing for the supplicant, and because a human being does not comprehend his real :good and bad correctly as Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), says in the Holy Qur'an

".Man prayeth for evil as he prayeth for good"

- ۱۷:۱۱) Holy Qur'an)

i.e. as he strives for his good and blessing also endeavours for

his bad and evil (in his imagination considering it as good) even though this goodness might be decorated with evil, as has been narrated in the book Misbah al-Shari'a as :follows

There is nothing (to be asked) except Allah's nearness and countenance. It is up to“ the supplicant not to open his tongue except for good and welfare, and should not ask Allah anything other than goodness and blessing, and should never include harmful requests in his prayers. Secondly, if the prayer is not granted, he should never be disappointed and never be suspicious about Allah's promise: 'I answer the prayer of My servants' and should consider that whatever he has asked in his prayer unconsciously, might have been harmful and undesirable, because of this very ”.consideration Allah has not granted it and instead has stored for him other blessings

Secret of Non-acceptance of the Prayer of Righteous .۲

I swear to my own soul that there exists mystery and secret in non-acceptance of at least some parts of the prayers of the righteous and impeccable ones, in spite of the fact that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), has himself promised that He will grant such prayers. Because Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), possesses unlimited mercy and compassion towards His righteous servants, and this very infinite love and affection compels Him to keep them immune from whatever constitutes as bad and evil, even .though in their own imaginations they regard it as something good and a blessing

The non-acceptance of their supplications and wants is due to divine expediency beyond our

comprehension like the expediency of getting a child killed through Prophet Khidr [a] - the killing which apparently from the point of view of the parents was evil and bad, but .in reality was blessing and goodness for them

Now let us suppose that this mother and father because of their being unaware of tragic and harmful future happenings would have considered their son's remaining alive as something good and a blessing for themselves, and with this intention would have beseeched Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), for their son's life. Then in that case would the granting of their prayer (with the intention of good and blessing) be - that their son remains alive and instead of being good and blessed makes them losers in both the worlds, or he better be killed so that the parent could be saved from loosing both the words, and instead of him another righteous son be awarded to them? It is obvious that acceptance of their prayer could be materialized only through the killing .of their son

Because a supplicant prays with the intention of achieving goodness, prosperity, and salvation through this means; in case he did not mention anything particular in his prayer and, wished for its grant, then it would be appropriate that he should consider his prosperity and welfare in whatever is granted by Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted). Now if He sees and is knowledgeable that whatever is being asked by a supplicant (unknowingly) would bring nothing except loss and calamity

for him; then in that case the real grant of supplicant's prayer would be not to accept his prayer, instead to bestow upon him whatever is considered good and useful for .him

Non-acceptance of such prayer by Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), are commonly practised among human beings, and very often it happens that someone would turn .down the request of a dear one for the sake of prudence

For example, if a sick person mistakenly considers a fatal harmful drug as health-giving and begs his father to give him that medicine, and the father being knowledgeable of its fatal harmful effects, would then the father grant the son's request? Never. And, if he knowingly grants his son's request by giving him that fatal drug, then in that case wouldn't he be criticised by the wise people, and wouldn't it be said that the son requested a health-giving medicine and instead his father gave him ?a fatal drug

Similar is the story of Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), and his servant, sometimes it may happen that a servant through the means of his prayer asks something from Allah say wealth and property, because, he considers it something good for his wellbeing, but since Allah's vast and infinite wisdom which covers all do's and don'ts relevant to a servant's life affairs knows that wealth and property do not suit this servant; knows that increase of wealth for him even though he is not aware of it would result in his taking distance from truth

.and reality

Here it is that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), because, of his profound love and compassion towards his servant does not grant the servant's prayer and instead .makes him deprived from the wealth and property asked by him in his prayer

Because, if a servant seeks wealth and property through prayer from Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), it is because of this reason that he regards it as a means of good and prosperity for himself, without being aware of the fact that his prosperity .and welfare lies in his being poor and destitute instead of being rich and wealthy

And since Allah, (the Glorious, the Exalted), is knowledgeable about the fact that wealth and property is not the real grant of his prayer, i.e., to bestow upon a servant the blessings which are indeed required for his prosperity and eternal salvation. The real grant of prayer does not mean that Allah should bestow upon a servant whatever is desired by him - even though being aware of the fact - that unknowingly the servant has asked for a thing which would be harmful and disastrous for him. Or, in :other words the grant of a servant's prayer could be explained as follows

In cases where a servant prays for something which would bring good and prosperity for the servant, the grant of his prayer (by Allah) would mean to bestow upon him the .desired things

But whereby a servant unknowingly or in his imagination considering it good for his prosperity, while

in reality it is harmful and disastrous for him asks something from Allah the grant of his prayer would be to not to grant his prayer, thus, making him deprived from his .desired wants

The above matter that - occasionally Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), grants a supplicants prayer by non-acceptance of his request has been described in many traditions. Even it has been narrated in some of the traditions, that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), because of his love towards a servant, sometimes not only did not accept his prayer, instead due to His love, gets the servant occasionally involved into some minor sins, in order to keep him immune from greater sins like arrogance and .self-conceit which would bring greater calamities upon the servant

Therefore, whatever Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), decides about a servant, without least doubt it would bring for him salvation and prosperity; whatever He does with a servant, even though apparently and over all may not appear in his favour, but relative to that person's affairs and characteristics, certainly means goodness and prosperity, and is executed in accordance with wisdom and prudence. Apart from that, Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), bestows all sorts of favours and blessings which are useful for His righteous believers and are permitted by His wisdom and discretion, .even though if they do not seek them in their prayers

Questions and Answers .۳

Perhaps acceptance of the above explanation might be a little bit difficult for some people and they might ask that if such is the

case than what is the benefit of prayer? And what are the meanings of prayer's acceptance? In reply it must be said: sometimes the action, deeds, and affairs of a servant are such that divine wisdom dictates to deprive him from a particular thing .because of his deeds and actions

Here it is that if a servant raises his hands for prayer beseeching from Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), for good and prosperity, then this same prayer would result in causing the earlier divine discretion which was to deprive the servant from utilization of a particular blessing to be changed to other divine discretion, i.e., to allow the servant from utilization of that particular blessing. Therefore, a prayer might result in lots of rewards and blessings which were denied before, because, of our undesirable actions and deeds. In addition to its being granted by Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), .a supplication also possesses plenty of precious and valuable advantages

Etiquette of Prayer .۴

point

There are special etiquette and instructions for prayer, some of them will be :described here as narrated in the Islamic traditions as follows

Being Hopeful towards Allah and Hopeless from Others

One of the etiquette of prayer is that the supplicant for granting of his prayer and fulfilment of his needs should put his trust only in Allah and should not look towards anyone except Him. This etiquette has been described in the following verse of the :Holy Qur'an

".And call on Him in fear and hope"

.(Holy Qur'an (۷:۵۶ –

:And now let us refer to some of the Islamic traditions

In the famous

book of al-Kafi as well as in many authentic books the following tradition has been narrated from Imam al-Sadiq [a] who has quoted from his father who quoted from :the Holy Prophet [s] that Allah has said to some of the prophets

I swear by My Majesty and Splendour that: whoever puts his hope in someone other" than Me, I will cut off his hope, will dress him in the robe of disgrace and wretchedness, will deprive him from My nearness, will cut off communication with him and will hide his memory. Woe be upon him, who takes shelter in other than Me during difficulties, while the solution of difficulties rest with Me. Does he hope in others while I remain living and eternal? Does he go to the homes of human beings for solution of his problems while the gates of their houses remain closed? Does he leave the door of ?My house while its gate remains always open

Was there anyone who trusted Me and was betrayed? The hopes of My servants are tied to Me, and I take care of their hopes. I have filled the sky with those who never get tired of My praise, and have ordered the angels never to close the door between Me and my servants. Does not, the one who faces the problem know that no one can solve it except with My permission? Why does not the servant approach Me for his needs, while I had already blessed him with favours without

?his asking for them

Why does he not ask me instead of asking others? Does he imagine that in the beginning I bestow My favours upon the servant and will now deprive him after his request? Am I miser that My servants regard me as miserly? Do not the world and Hereafter belong to me? Are not mercy and benevolence My characteristics? Do not ?all the desires end with Me? Who has the power to terminate them

I swear with My Majesty and Splendour that if all the needs of all of the world's“ habitants are summed up, and if I bestow upon them in accordance to their wants, not even the equivalent to the weight of a tiny particle will be decreased from My kingdom. Whatever is bestowed by Me, how could be it susceptible to loss or reduction? How destitute and wretched is the one who is hopeless of My blessings? How helpless is the one who disobeys me, indulges into forbidden deeds, disregards ”?My limits and transgresses

:In another divine tradition (hadith al-qudsi) it has been narrated

Whatever my servant imagines about Me I am exactly like his imagination, therefore,“ ”.lest my servant imagine anything except good about Me

:The Prophet [s] has said

Beseech Allah with certainty and hope, and request your wants and requirements“ ”.from Him

:Imam al-Sadiq [a] has said

Whenever you beseech Allah for granting of your prayer and needs, imagine that the“ ”.prayer has been granted and your needs have been provided

In a tradition it has been narrated that Pharaoh

was being drowned he pleaded for help from Prophet Moses [a] and since he turned :down his request, Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), revealed to him

Oh Moses! You did not help Pharaoh because you were not his creator, but if he“ would have called Me for help, without doubt I would have helped him, after all I ”.happen to be his Creator

Also, there is another famous tradition that when Korah (Qaroon) asked help from Prophet Moses [a] and did not hear any response, Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), ?reprimanded him that why he did not help Korah

It has been narrated in a tradition that on the Judgement Day, when the accounting“ of deeds is completed, special angels will lead the servant whose sins are greater than his good deeds towards the Hell. While in this state the servant turns his face and looks towards his back, then Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), in spite of being knowledgeable about him orders to bring him back and asks him, why did you turn your face backward and look towards Me? O' Allah! I never imagined, never expected .it, and never thought that You will treat me like this '. Replied the servant

O' My angels! I swear to my Splendour and Majesty that till he existed, never had' such good expectations towards Me, nevertheless, take him to Paradise because now ”.he is claiming to have such good expectations

Importance of Remaining Hopeful towards Allah

In some of the traditions it has been narrated that whoever expects good from Allah (the

Glorious, the Exalted), He too likes to treat him with goodness and manage his affairs in accordance of his expectations. But here it must be pointed out that one should not be tricked by Satan, and incorrectly may regard carelessness, easy going, and slackness in religious affairs as having good intentions towards Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted).Obviously such interpretation does not have any logical reasoning and expecting good from Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), should never be used to open .the ground for carelessness and laxity in religious affairs

Otherwise, how come these same people who believe in this fallacy, through utilization of the excuse - expecting good from Allah - do not practice easiness and carelessness in their worldly affairs like endeavouring for earning a living, in spite of the fact that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), with emphasis and swearing has insured the sustenance for all living beings, and only it is in the religious or Hereafter's affairs that the excuse of having good intentions towards Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), is mentioned, thus, showing laziness and carelessness in performance of their religious ?obligations

If they are honest in their saying, and truly trust Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), and expect good from Him, they should have practised their same belief in their financial and worldly affairs too. If they would have a compassionate and kind father financially capable of taking care of their living expenses, then in that case because of their ,having firm trust upon their father's assurance

they would not have been worried about their living, and certainly would not have bothered to make efforts and endeavours for earning a living.

Then how it is that they believe so firmly in their father's words for assuring their sustenace? But do not put their trust and hopes in Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), who has assured in the Holy Qur'an, the provision of sustenace for all living creatures? Are the compassion, benevolence, and blessing of Allah lesser than their father's? Or, is He incompetent in providing the sustenance to His servants? Or, does He show stinginess in providing sustenance to His servants? Is not Allah, the most beneficent and compassionate? Are not His benevolence, blessings, and favours greater than everything and anybody else?

Therefore, those who do not have such good intentions towards Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), in their worldly affairs, should not claim to have such good intentions in their religious affairs, otherwise, their claim would be nothing except an excuse for being negligent and easy going in their religious affairs.

Abstinence from Sinning – Oppression Against People's Lives, Possessions, and Honour

Another etiquette of prayer is that the supplicant should renounce sinning, especially transgressions, oppressions, and eating forbidden (haram) things. He should not raise his hand of oppression towards people's lives, possessions, and prestige, instead should endeavour to have a pleasing character. Following are some of the traditions in this regard.

In a divine tradition it has been narrated:

“From you is the prayer; and it is up to Me to grant it; the prayers of all supplicants are granted

except those who have filled their bellies with food provided through forbidden ".(haram) means

:The Holy Prophet [s] has narrated

Whoever wishes his prayer be granted by Allah must endeavour to earn his" sustenace through lawful means, i.e., he must restrain himself from earning his living ".through fraudulent and forbidden means

:[Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), has recommended to Prophet Jesus [a

Say to the oppressors of bani-Israel: Do not beseech Me in the state of idol-" worshipping and usury, because, I have sworn that whoever beseeches Me I will grant his needs, and My grant for those who are indulged in idol-worshipping and ".usury would be nothing except cursing and damnation for them

It has been narrated from the Holy Prophet [s] that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), :sent revelation to him

Warn the Islamic community (Ummah) not to congregate inside the mosque for" offering prayer and beseeching Me while being transgressors or oppressors towards other human beings, in that case till they are busy in prayers and supplications would only be inflicted with My curse and damnation, or otherwise they must remove that transgression from themselves (through obtaining the consent of the oppressed). It is only after this stage that they will become nearer to me, so that I would become their eyes and ears, and would make them companions of the prophets, martyrs, and ".righteous saints

About the non-acceptance of prayer of someone in bani-Israel it has been narrated that his prayer was not granted, because, he besought Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), with a

.contaminated tongue and heart as well as with ill intention

:[It has been narrated from the Holy Prophet [s

That whoever beseeches Allah with immodest character is like someone who wants“ ”.to shoot the arrows with a chord-less bow

:Imam al-Sadiq [a] has said

Allah does not grant the prayer of a sleeping and negligent heart, therefore, one“ should pray to Him whole-heartedly, and should beseech him with attention while being fully awakened, only then a supplicant should look forward for his prayer being ”.granted

:It has been mentioned in a tradition that the prayer of the following is not granted

A person who is sitting idle at home, and without making endeavours for earning a“ .١ ”.living asks Allah for sustenance through prayer

.Prayer of someone who beseeches Allah to inflict harm upon his fellow companion .٢

Prayer of someone who is blessed with wealth by Allah and spent it carelessly in .٣ .nonsense amusements

Prayer of some one who gives a loan to other party without obtaining his signature .۴ on a document, and in case the recipient of loan denies, the loan-giver beseeches ”.Allah for the repayment of his money through prayer

:It has been narrated in a tradition that

Whoever prays against his neighbours and relatives, or asks forbidden things“ ”.(haram) from Allah his prayers are not granted

:[Also, it has been quoted from the Commander of the Faithful Imam 'Ali [a

”.That while beseeching Allah one should not ask for impossible and forbidden things“

۵. Factors which Influence Prayer's Acceptance

point

In addition to the above-mentioned characteristics which prevent prayer's there are other etiquette and manners

which provide required background for prayer's acceptance, and it is up to the supplicant to pay attention towards them. Following is a brief description about those :factors

Shedding Tears and Crying .۵.۱

Fearing Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), beseeching him with tearful eyes, and lowering head upon his threshold are the etiquette of servanthood; in addition to bringing plenty of favours and blessings also provide background for prayer's .acceptance. Following are some traditions

:It has been narrated in a tradition

There is a bottleneck passage between Paradise and Hell, and except those who“ ”.shed tears out of fear for Allah's wrath, no one else would be able to pass through it

:[It has been narrated from the Holy Prophet [s

Allah has sworn with his Splendour and Majesty that My servants do not know the“ value of shedding tears and crying; are not aware that for their crying what heavy price and sweet rewards have been stored; for them I have provided special palaces ”.in My vicinity, and there is no partner to share it with them

:It has been narrated

On the Day of Judgement there is no eye which is not tearful, except the eye which“ was tearful in the world because of Allah's fear; there is no one with eyes full of tears because of Allah's fear, except that Allah will forbid his body parts from Hell's fire, there is no face with tears of Allah's fear flowing upon his cheeks, but Allah will make it immune from disgrace and abjectness; there is nothing in creation but has its

definite dimensions and weight, except a tiny drop a tear shed for the sake of Allah's fear, that through this drop Allah would silence the oceans of His wrath; and if in a community (ummah) a single servant sheds tears, Allah would bestow forgiveness upon the entire community for the sake of that servant's tear."

Of course, there are plenty of traditions about this matter.

۵.۲. To Offer Thanks, Praise, and Apology

Another etiquette of prayer is to praise and adore Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted); the Commander of the Faithful Imam 'Ali [a] was asked:

"How to praise Allah and consider Him the Greatest?" The Imam replied: "You must recite the following:

'O' Thou who are nearer to me than my jugular vein; O' Thou who is the distance between a man and his heart; O' Thou who is manifested as the most fascinating scene upon the horizon; and O' Thou, who could not be compared with any other thing.'"

While praising Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), it would be more desirable that we should beseech Him with His sacred names and characteristics, which are relevant to our prayer and needs; must remember His blessings and bounties and should thank Him for that; then we should think about our transgressions and sins, and should offer excuse and Apology.

۵.۳. Deliberation and Persistence

Also, it would be desirable that the supplicant should take a pause and ponder about his prayer; should avoid haste and hurrying; should insist whatever he desired from Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), because he likes a servant who insists and shows persistence for

.his wants. Also one must repeat his needs at least three times

Praying Away from People's Sight .۵.۴

It is more appropriate that one should stand in prayer in an isolated place away from people's sight so that he could prevent himself from dissimulation as well as could :obey Allah's command. Also it has been narrated that

One prayer in privacy is equivalent to seventy prayers performed in the presence of" ".others

Standing Together for Prayer .۵.۵

Sometimes it is appropriate that a group of people should stand up for praying together, and it is much better if the number of people be at least forty, or at least four people each of them repeating his wants ten times, or in case there is only one (person, it would be much better if he asks for his wants forty times.(۱

Humility and Meekness .۵.۶

Another etiquette of prayer is that one should stand before Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), with a humble heart and in a state of meekness; as much as possible in a pleasing and soft manner of tongue, considering himself as destitute and nothing; and in this manner should present his needs and wants in prayer. It has been narrated :[that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), said to Prophet Jesus [a

O' Jesus! Beseech me like a poor and destitute who does not have any shelter except" Me; beseech Me with a broken heart; in isolation and privacy remember me a lot; I love a servant who uses his tongue in a soft and pleasing manner, in a state of earthiness, but, of course with an

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Group-prayer may seems in contradiction with whatever has been explained - ۱ earlier about praying in secrecy. Some of the prayers and wants require isolation and privacy and for them congregation and assembly might be harmful, but on the other

hand prayers for asking immunity from common disasters should be offered in a group as congregation prayers [Author].

alive and awakened heart and not with a sleepy and negligent heart; I like and appreciate My servant's endeavours in sending his heart broken sad voice and ".melody of his grief to My ears

Also, it has been narrated that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), said to Prophet Moses :[[a

Whenever you beseech Me, you must be in a state of trembling with fear, being" afraid of my wrath put your face upon dirt by offering prostration; tell your mysteries with a broken heart and trembling with fear; let your heart die because of My wrath; look towards Me in a state of frenzy (in My love), like someone who runs away from the fear of enemy and cries for help and support. You too should cry because of fear ".of sins and seek My help, because, I am the best helper for My servants

[Salutations Upon the Holy Prophet [s] and His Holy Progeny Ahlul–Bait [a .۵.۷

point

Another etiquette of prayer is to offer salutations upon the Holy Prophet [s] and his :Holy Progeny Ahlul-Bait [a] before and after the prayer. Following are few traditions

It has been narrated that in appraisal of deeds nothing is more precious and" esteemed than sending salutations upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad [s] and his Holy ".([Progeny (Ahlul-Bait [a

:[The following has been narrated from Imam al-Sadiq [a

Unless and until a prayer is accompanied by salutations upon the Holy Prophet [s] and" ".his Holy Progeny (Ahlul-Bait [a]) it is far away from being granted

:Also it has been reported

That whoever wants to present his needs before Allah must start his prayer firstly"

by sending salutations upon the Holy Prophet Muhammad [s] and his Holy Progeny (Ahlul-Bait [a]), should then remember his own needs and desires and again should finish it by repeating the above-mentioned salutations, because, the salutations offered at both ends of the prayer are undoubtedly accepted immediately and Allah is Greater and Most Compassionate than, that he would accept the two ends (i.e. beginning and end) of the prayer leaving the middle portion unaccepted."

Importance of Sending Salutations Upon the Holy Prophet [s] and His Holy Progeny Ahlul-Bait [a]

Here, it must be added that, sending salutations upon the Holy Prophet [s] and His Holy Progeny Ahlul-Bait [a] are indeed desirable and extremely important as, Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), does not accept the belief (iman) of someone who does not believe in the vicegerency (wilayah) of the Holy Prophet [s] and His Holy Progeny Ahlul-Bait [a] likewise, does not accept the prayers of those who do not send salutations upon them, i.e., as the vicegerency (wilayah) of the Holy Prophet [s] and his Holy Progeny Ahlul-Bait [a] is the prerequisite and criteria for belief (iman), likewise sending salutations upon them is also essential etiquette and requirement of the prayer.

Also it must be mentioned that salutations upon the Holy Prophet [s] and his Holy Progeny Ahlul-Bait [a] like other deeds and worship consist of outwardly appearance as well as inner character, possess body as well as spirit, and their spirit is that we must discover that what special majesty and splendour are possessed by these noble personalities before Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted); we must appreciate

that they are our intercessors and mediators near Him and He does not accept .anyone, except through the path of resorting (tawassul) to them

We must discover that indeed they are superior and exalted over our own selves; of course, all these findings and realizations, should be real and true appreciation, in order to influence our actions and deeds. That is, our actions and deeds must indicate that we have indeed discovered their splendour and majesty; have accepted their superiority and exaltedness above our own selves; and if, with such genuine appreciation and understanding, send salutations upon those exalted ones, undoubtedly, they too would respond to our one salutation with ten salutations, one hundred salutations, and may be many times with infinite salutations, as well as our .(prayer will be accepted by Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted

Sincerity and Heart's Purity .۵.۸

Another etiquette of prayer is that the supplicant should not beseech Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), superficially with tongue, instead should seek Him with profundities of his conscience and from the fathoms of his heart and soul; should purify his inner self from everything other than Him, especially, worldly materialistic affairs which contaminate heart and make the soul unclean; should keep himself away from such thoughts as being suspicious and disbelieving towards Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted),because such thoughts are indication of disrespect and weakness of faith, which eventually make the heart dead whereby Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), turns his face away from human beings, as the Holy Qur'an said:

That your thought which ye“

".did think about the Lord, hath ruined you

.(Holy Qur'an (۴۱:۲۲ –

Prevention is Better than Cure .۵.۹

Another etiquette of prayer is to supplicate during happy and good times; such prayer possesses lot of worth and value and could be compared with the prevention before being inflicted with the disease. Otherwise, forgetting prayer and Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), during happy and good times and beseeching Him and stretching hands for supplication only during hard times while being surrounded by calamities in the .state of helplessness would not produce any significant gain

Remembrance and Preference of Others .۵.۱۰

point

It is desirable that during prayer we must keep in mind others while asking our own deeds, whatever we ask from Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), it should not be only for our own selves, rather should ask similar things for others as well, and undoubtedly such supplication is more deserving and is nearer for being granted. Further it would be more desirable if we prefer other believers than our own selves, that is firstly we .pray for them and then should mention our own wants and desires

Of course, praying for other believers must be done with sincerity; should be accompanied by one's heart and soul for the sake of mutual friendship, and not for the sake of formalities by the tip of tongue, or with selfish ideas, that praying for others would result in grant of our own prayer sooner, then in that case, it would not .produce any result

Importance of Friendship of a Believer and His Remembrance during Prayer

It must be clearly understood, that regarding the friendship of believers, what really ,constitutes its axis

foundation, and criteria is – that to be friendly with them, should be only for Allah's sake and not for the sake of any other motive. It is this type of friendship of believers, which have been considered as precious and esteemed in the Islamic traditions and the Holy Qur'an, it has been emphasized a lot, so much so that in accordance with the :following narration

".It has been considered as the most stable pillar of belief"

:And in another tradition

".The faith has been defined, as having such sincere friendships with believers"

In praising the believers who love each other in this manner, a lot has been written in :traditions. For example, it has been narrated in a tradition

"Whenever the two friends shake their hands Allah too puts his hand between their hands and presses the hand of the one who is more steadfast and sincere in that ".friendship

:Regarding the believer who prays for other believers it has been narrated

"Whenever a believer prays for a fellow brother believer, an angel from the worldly sky says to him: 'O' servant of Allah! Know that whatever you have asked for your fellow brother believer a thousand times of that would be given to you; the second angel makes triple and so on so forth until the seventh angel announces seven hundred thousands times of reward bestowed upon him. Then Allah announces glad tidings to him saying: 'O' My servant! My treasure never gets emptied through My donations! I will bestow upon you million times of

“'.whatever you have asked for your fellow brother believer

Regarding the believers who help and support each other or fulfil the needs of other :believers, there are plenty of traditions. It has been narrated in a tradition

Whoever fulfils the wants of a brother believer is like the one who has worshiped“ ”.Allah with fasting during day and offering night prayer for nine thousands years

:It has been narrated in another tradition

Whoever does not mobilize all his resources and strength in“

fulfilment of a brother believer's wants has indeed done a treachery towards Allah, ”.His Prophet, and the believers

The story of Imam al-Sadiq [a] and Hasan bin Yaqtin is very famous in this regard. In summary, Imam al-Sadiq write a brief recommendation letter in favour of Hasan bin :Yaqtin to the ruler of Ahwaz as follows

Before Allah there is a heavenly shade or canopy in which no one can rest but without“ opening a knot of difficulties for a brother believer, or help him, or do some good however small it may be in his favour. And now a brother believer has approached .you, regards

The ruler of Ahwaz after reading this letter came out bare-footed to welcome Hasan, received him warmly, kissed his face, asked him about Imam's condition, then took him inside his home and treated him with warmth and affection, fulfilled his requirements, forgave his taxes, and divided equally all his wealth, horses, and slaves .between him and Hasan

Of course, he undertook all these good actions and justified them for Allah's sake“

and in the path of Ahlul-Bait's [a] friendship . After a little while Hasan returned before Imam al-Sadiq [a] and described his encounter with the ruler of Ahwaz then the Imam said: 'By Allah, because of this kindness shown by the ruler towards you I am happy, so too my impeccable forefathers, the Commander of the Faithful Imam 'Ali [a], the ".Holy Prophet [s] and Allah

Also, there are plenty of traditions about those who make believers uncomfortable. :For example, Husayn bin Abi al-Ala has narrated

Once together with twenty or more pilgrims I went to Mecca and sacrificed a sheep" at every lodging station for my fellow pilgrims. Later on when I had a chance of seeing Imam al-Sadiq [a], he said to me: 'woe be upon you Husayn! Why did you hurt the believers and make them feel insulted?' I said: 'I seek Allah's shelter from doing such a thing.' He said: 'I heard that you sacrificed a sheep at each lodging stations for your fellow companions.' I said: 'O' my master! By Allah, in this act I don't have any other '.intention except seeking Allah's pleasure

He said: 'Did not you realize that perhaps among them there might have been others" who would have liked to do the same thing, but since they do not have the financial strength to do such a thing, considered themselves as wretched and insulted?' I said: 'O' son of the Holy Prophet [s] salutation and greetings of Allah be upon you! I seek Allah's

“'.pardon, and would never indulge again in such an act

Here, we would overlook from mentioning about plenty of fascinating traditions dealing with this matter, and limiting our discussion to only few above-mentioned .narrations

Raising Hands Upward in Prayer .۵.۱۱

To raise hands upward during prayer is another etiquette and code of the prayer, and it is narrated that when the Holy Prophet [s] stood up for prayer and wants he stretched his hands forward exactly the way the poor and destitute stretch their .hands forward for receiving food etc

:In this regard when Imam al-Sadiq [a] was questioned, he replied

Whenever you seek Allah's refuge, stand facing towards Mecca (Qiblah) while the .۱ .(palms of the hands should also be facing (Qiblah

When you beseech Allah make distance between your fingers while holding your .۲ .palms towards the heaven

When you cut off hopes from everybody and put all your hopes towards Him, you .۳ .must hold your forefinger pointing towards Him

.In the state of supplication raise your hands to the level of your head .۴

And while crying and shedding tears because of fear of Allah's wrath and .۵ .punishment, should shake your forefinger

Raising hands upwards is the etiquette of prayer in sitting and standing position, but occasionally supplication in the state of prostration possesses more merit, part of the prayer should be recited during prostration. Let us describe the state of prostration, .briefly

Prostration and its Reality .۵.۱۲

Prostration, in its outwardly form and in true manifestation is the most supreme state

and spiritual position for a human being, i.e., the position of annihilation in Allah

p: ۸۶

:the Glorious, the Exalted), as it has been mentioned in the traditions)

".A human being in the state of prostration is nearer to Allah than in any other state"

Earlier, we have mentioned about the Holy Prophet's [s] recommendation for prolonged prostration for everybody. Prostration and especially prolonged prostration is the most important and most elegant state of servanthood, and it is because of this reason that in each prayer unit, it is performed twice, whilst other actions are performed only once. And it is from this consideration that about the prolonged prostration of Ahlul Bait [a] and their special Shi'ites a lot of things have been narrated, e.g., Imam al-Sajjad [a](١), sometimes has recited the following prayer in prostration .for one thousand times

".In reality there is no god but Allah"

Also about Imam Kadhim [a](٢) and some of his companions it has been narrated that .sometimes their prostration prolonged from the day-break till the noon prayer

During my stay at Najaf al-Ashraf(٣) for religious education there was a learned Sheikh who was the leader and shelter for pious and mystics. I asked him to tell me the most superior deed which he himself has tried and which is most effective and :helpful for a gnostic's spiritual journey. He recommended for me two things

Firstly: performing a prolonged prostration and reciting the following invocation :during each day and night

".There is no god save Thee Be Thou Glorified. Lo! I have been a wrong doer"

.(Holy Qur'an (٢١:٨٧ -

And the aim and intention of this invocation should

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١ - Here it should be understood that the conditions of Imam al-Sajjad [a] after the martyrdom of Imam Husayn [a] were such that he was mostly confined inside his

home. Similarly Imam al-Kadhim [a] was imprisoned by the Abbaside Caliph Harun ar-Rashid, where he remained until his martyrdom. [Tr]

۲- Imam al-Kadhim [a]: The son of the sixth Imam, he was contemporary with such Abbaside caliphs as al-Mansur and Harun al-Rashid. He lived most of his life in Madina with severe restrictions placed upon him and finally died in a prison in Baghdad. After him, the Imams were often not able to live in their traditional home of Madina, but were forced to remain near the caliph in Baghdad or Samara. He is buried in Kadhimayn in Iraq [Tr].

۳- Najaf al-Ashraf: is the tomb of Commander of the Faithful Imam 'Ali [a] in Iraq, which used to be main center of learning in the Shi'i world before the restrictions and pressures placed on the Shi'i scholars of Najaf by the Bathist regime of Baghdad. The Bathist persecution of Najaf reached a high point in May, ۱۹۶۹, when a number of scholars ('ulama) were arrested and tortured, and religious endowments were confiscated [Tr].

:be that

O' Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted)! My soul is imprisoned in this worldly prison and' has been bonded in the chains of passions and carnal desires; with my indecent behavior, I have chained and imprisoned my own self; and I never say this unjust statement, that you have done this to me, that you have entangled me into this prison and bondage. Never! Never! You are too Glorious and inviolable for such statements, and it is I who has inflicted upon me such calamity, I have oppressed myself with my '.own hands

That noble saint recommended this prostration to all of his friends, and they practised this recommendation by reciting the above-mentioned invocation in the prostration. Some of them recited one thousand times, some of them even recited a little more or less, and some of them three thousand times and discovered the constructive effects .in their own lives

Having a Ring in the Hand .۵.۱۳

point

Another etiquette of prayer is to put a ring of Turquoise (Firozeh) Red-chalcedony (Aqiq) in the fingers; it has been reported that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted) has :said

I feel ashamed to reject the supplication of a supplicant having a ring of Turquoise or " ".Red Chalcedony upon his fingers

:Also Imam al-Sadiq [a] has narrated

A hand with a Turquoise or Red-chalcedony ring raised in prayer is dearer before " ".Allah than any other hand

Importance of the Ring

Here it would be essential to mention an important point about putting on a ring; that

it is very unlikely that a human being will ever be immune from commitment of

sins and transgressions, therefore, it is prudent that in order to compensate for those committed sins, one should engage himself continuously into performance of some of .the worship and supplications, and putting ring upon the finger is one of them

Paying Alms and Charity .۵.۱۴

The paying of alms is another etiquette and manner of prayer, which has been emphasized a lot, in plenty of Islamic traditions; it is desirable that a supplicant should :never forget about it. The following has been narrated in a tradition

".With payment of alms beseech Him for your own sustenance"

Suitable Timings .۵.۱۵

point

It is appropriate that a supplicant should pay special attention about the timings of his :prayer. Following are some of the most suitable timings for supplications

A. Friday Day and Night

(It has been narrated from Imam al-Baqir [a]:(۱

Every Thursday night till the end of Friday, Allah calls his believing servants from the" Upper Heavens, inviting them towards Himself and announces: 'Is there any believing servant who before the day breaks asks forgiveness for his sins and I forgive him, is there any one who seeks anything from me and I grant his requirements, is there a '"?believing servant, who cries for Me, and I respond

:Also, it has been narrated

Allah delays the grant of a supplicant's prayer and fulfilment of his needs until" ".Friday

:[Also, it has been narrated from the Holy Prophet [s

The day of Friday is the most superior and exalted among all the days in the sight of"

Allah, even superior than the days of Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha. He continued and :said

p: ۸۹

Imam al-Baqir [a]: (۵۷/۶۷۵-۱۱۴/۳۷۲), the son of the fourth imam, he was present at - ۱ Karbala at a young age. Because of changing political and religious conditions, among them the general revulsion following the events at Karbala, many people came to Madina to learn the religious and spiritual sciences from him. He trained numerous well known men of religion, and mainly for this reason is the first Imam 'Ali [a] from whom large numbers of traditions are recorded. He is buried in the Baqi Cemetery in .[Madina [Tr

there is a special particular hour on Friday, that at that time there is no one who' ".desires anything permissible and proper, but Allah grants his requirements

The Holy Prophet [s] continued: "During Friday there are two hours which possess special merits; firstly, the hour when the Imam of the Friday congregational-prayer finishes his sermon until the lines of congregational-prayer get readied for the prayer, ".and the other hour is the end of the day

B. The noon (dhor) and afternoon (asr) of Wednesday, especially, for prayer and .cursing of infidels

C. During night (isha) a), it has been narrated that such opportunity and preference .were not given to the past nations

D. The first hour of the first half of the Night, it has been narrated from Imam al-Sadiq :[[a

There is a particular hour during, the night, in which if a believer would offer the" prayer, it is impossible but it would be accepted (by Allah). He was asked: 'which hour "is it?' The first hour of the first half of the night', replied the Imam

:[Also, it has been narrated from the Commander of the Faithful Imam 'Ali [a

It was at this hour that Prophet David [a] went out to fight against Goliath." Also he" "…. said: "Whoever prays during this hour, his prayer is granted but

.E. End portion of night till the dawn or the last one third of the night

:[It has been narrated from the Holy Prophet [s

Whenever the end portion of night arrives Allah looking at his servants says: 'Is"

there any supplicant so that I could grant his prayer? Is there any needy so that may I fulfil his needs? Is there any repentant so that I there could accept his repentance? Is there anyone offering apology so that I could accept it?"

In another tradition it has been narrated that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted) says:

"O' righteous ones strive and o' sinners and transgressors stop doing it."

Also it has been narrated:

"Whoever sleeps in that portion of the night till the dawn, Satan urinates in his ears."

Response of Sayyid Ibn Tawus to Divine Proclamation

The most celebrated learned scholar and jurisprudent Sayyid Ibn Tawus (R.A.) who in the words of my own teacher - holds the highest rank in the community after the Sinless Imams [a] and no one else could be compared to him - has responded to this divine invitation with most elegant and sublime themes and sentences. And it would be most desirable if the wayfarer towards the spiritual journey, during this hour of the night should recite those sentences and contents from the book Uddat al-Da'i, in response to that divine proclamation.

Another Important Point From Sayyid Ibn Tawus

It must be mentioned that this pious tradition of responding to divine proclamation, for the first time was established by Ibn Tawus, similarly he was the pioneer of celebrating the first day of his becoming obliged for religious duties as the Day of Feast (Jashn al-Taklif) for thanking Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), because of bestowing upon him this distinction (i.e., to perform religious obligations). And it was not heard that before him

anyone has done so, therefore, in truth both of the above-mentioned initiatives are .indicative of his sagacity, great spirit, and lively mind

F. At the breaking of dawn, the duration between the real and false day-break, in my .opinion this is the best time especially for prayer of sustenance

.G. From dawn till sunrise

H. The Night of Power (Qadr), especially the night of twenty-third of the Holy Month of .Ramadhan

I. The Nights of Awakening (Shab al-Ahya), i.e., the first night of the Holy Month of Rajab, the ۱۵th night of the Holy Month of Sha'ban, the night of Eid-ul-Fitr and the .night of Eid ul-Adha

(J. The Days of Eid-ul-Fitr, Eid-ul-Adha and the Day of 'Araf'a.(۱

K. After finishing the daily mandatory prayers, the Commander of the Faithful Imam :['Ali [a] has quoted from the Holy Prophet [s

Whoever, after offering daily mandatory prayers supplicates - his supplications are" ".granted

:Ibn Faham says

I saw the Commander of the Faithful, Imam 'Ali, in my dream and asked him about this tradition, he replied that it is correct, and said after the mandatory prayer put :your head in prostration and recite

O' Allah! By the one who has reported this tradition, by the one who has quoted this" tradition from its narrator, send salutations upon all of them and grant my such and ".such needs

:[It has been reported from Imam al-Sadiq [a

Allah has made daily prayers mandatory upon you at times most liked by Him. You"

".too should beseech Him for fulfilment of your needs at those times

There

Day of 'Araf'a: The ninth day of the Month of Dhu'l-hijja, when all the pilgrims - ۱ participating in the Hajj must be present at the plain of `Arafa outside Mecca. For the text of the prayer that Imam Husayn [a] recited on this day, see Sheikh Abbas Qummi, Mafatih al-Jinan, pp.۳۵۰-۳۶۹, and for a translation of it, see William C. Chittick's A Shi'ite .[Anthology (Albany, N.Y., ۱۹۸۰), pp.۹۳-۱۱۳ [Tr

are traditions regarding beseeching Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), after .performance of recommended (nafilah) prayers and other recommended deeds

L. During blowing wind, rain fall, at the day's end, when shadow disappears, and when the first drop of the blood of a martyr is spilled; during all of the above incidents the Gates of the Heaven are opened and the background for the grant of prayer is .materialized

Suitable Place .۵.۱۶

Selection of suitable place like the Raas al-Husayn (the place where the head of Imam al-Husayn [a](۱) is buried), or any other sacred place is another etiquette and manner of supplication, which has been mentioned in some of the traditions; supplication at such places undoubtedly possesses more distinction and is more nearer to be .granted

Important Thing About the Prayer .۵.۱۷

It will be sufficient to limit the description about the etiquette and codes of supplication to whatever already has been explained above, with the reminder that what constitute the most important thing in supplication are its esoteric codes and etiquette. Therefore, it is up to the supplicant that he should mobilize his best endeavours for their utilization, keeping in mind that all the profit and loss, good and evil lie in Allah's hand. He should never forget that all his good and welfare rest only in .Allah's guardianship, nearness, and pleasure

Therefore from these considerations in his supplications, he should not think anything, or ask Allah anything, other than these, or whatever contains their background; that a true believer even likes Allah's bounties only from this consideration that he considers

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۱- Imam Husayn [a]: The younger son of the Commander of the Faithful Imam 'Ali [a] and Fatimah al-Zahra [a] - the daughter of the Holy Prophet [s] - Fatimah al-Zahra

was born in Madina on Thursday ۳rd Sha'ban ۴ A.H; like his brother he lived most of his life quietly in Madina under the watchful eyes of the Caliph's officials and spies. When Mu'awiyyah's son Yazid became caliph, he demanded allegiance from Imam al-Husayn [a], who refused to give it. Finally Imam al-Husayn [a] felt it necessary to go into battle against Yazid to protest against the injustices which were being carried out in the name of Islam. He and a small group of followers including most of his immediate family were cruelly massacred at Karbala. The day of his martyrdom is ۱۰th Muharram, ۶۱ A.H. "Ashura has become the most solemn day of the Islamic calendar, marked by processions and universal mourning. He is buried in Karbala in Iraq [Tr].

them from Him, rather in bounties too does(1) not see anything except their relationship with Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted). It is because of this reason that all his existence, self, actions, and spirit became indifferent from world and worldliness and is continuously engaged in praise, adoration, and supplications.

Of course, being so is not easy and such state is not achieved without going through harsh rigorous asceticism, and only a small number of favourite gnostics have been able to attain such grace; but others even the good ones and the companions of right-hand (Ashab ul-yamin) look, towards the means (Musabeb al-Asbaab).

And in their prayers instead of asking only Him, His-nearness, and His-pleasure present other requests and other wants. Therefore, it is for us that if we are not in the category of those special favourite gnostics who don't ask Him anything except Him, and do not ask anything from the beloved except the beloved himself,(2) at least, together with worldly requests, we must beseech Him for bestowing upon us His pleasure and nearness.

And if we are not lucky to have access to such grace at least we must ask him for forgiveness and Paradise together with our worldly deeds. May we be among those whose prayer is:

"Our Lord! Give unto us in the world that which is good and in the Hereafter which is good."

(Holy Qur'an (۲:۲۰۱ -

And if we cannot ask this continuously in all the prayers, at least we must ask this in some of the prayers.

Apart

۱- The famous Iranian poet Sheikh Sa'di* has composed the following famous verses in Persian: (be jahan khurram az anam ke jahan khurram az ost, asheqam bar hame

alam ke hame alam az ost). "I am happy with this world, because, this happiness of world is from Him, I am the lover of this whole world, because, this whole world is from Him." ※Sheikh Sa'di: Mushraf-ud-din Masleh bin Abdullah famous as Sheikh Sa'di was a great learned scholar and poet of Iran in the Seventh Century. He was born in a religious family in Shiraz, south-western Iran in ۶۰۶ A.H. He received his earlier education in Shiraz and then went to Baghdad for higher education. He travelled a lot and isited Syria, Hijaz and North Africa and used to mix socially with the people in those journeys. His famous works are Gulistan and Bostaan. Sa'di's tomb is located in .[Shiraz and it attracts large numbers of tourists throughout the year [Tr

goyand tamanai az dost bekun Sa'di az dost nakhuam kard juz dost tamannai).) -۲ "They suggest me, ask something from my beloved, I would never ask anything from ".my beloved but beloved himself

from this, what is most important in prayer is humility, earthiness, humbleness, and shedding tears, and it is up to the supplicant that in addition to the heart-brokenness and heart's humility, should not forget the exoteric manifestations of prayer such as: sitting upon dirt, putting dirt upon the face, putting head upon the dirt, opening the head and hairs, putting hands around the neck (like the captives), pleading with tongue in a sweet pleasing manner, begging, and utilizing the most appropriate .phrases and sentences relevant to your own needs and His Splendour and Majesty

Some Other Deeds of the Holy Month of Ramadhan

point

After heart's cleansing and purification with a true repentance which are the most desirable and essential deeds of this month; purification and cleansing of eatables, clothing, housing, automobile ...etc. and payment of khums(۱) is most desirable and compulsory, because, it has been mentioned in the traditions that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), has established (khums) for the purification of man's wealth. Therefore, from these consideration it is up to the watchful wayfarer to pay his Khums dues at the beginning of the month so that his food, clothing and other acts become lawful .((halal

In traditions, the point which has been emphasized a lot is that the Holy month of Ramadhan is the beginning of the new year, and if it was passed well and good, the entire year will pass well and good. From this consideration, those prudent wayfarers who believe that a human being's deeds and actions influence his characteristics and ,affairs; and further

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Khums: According to Shi'i school of thought, Khums is to be levied in an equitable - ۱ manner on all agricultural and commercial profits and all natural resources whether above or below the ground - in short, on all forms of wealth and income. It applies equally to a green grocer with his stall outside the mosques as to the shipping or mining magnate. They must all pay one-fifth of their surplus income, after customary

.[expenses are deducted to the Islamic ruler so that it enters the treasury [Tr

this influence is more effective especially during the Holy Month of Ramadhan because it is the beginning of the year, and all the future happenings of good and evil during the coming year are predestined in this Holy Month. Therefore, one should make himself readied for performance of special deeds of this month, especially for the deeds of its first day and should not neglect the recital of most famous and exalted prayer consisting of most sublime themes in the tradition quoted from Imam .al-Sadiq [a] in the book of Iqbal

Comments About the Etiquette of Prayer .۱

Of course, in reciting this prayer and other such relevant prayers the important thing for a prudent wayfarer is that after having the conditions of the prayer and paying due regards to its special etiquette and codes, it should be recited in a manner the .way it deserves to be

By my own soul, the one who appreciates the worth and merit of this prayer would not be least negligent in their proper recital, and would appreciate that those who have taught us this prayer, what a great favour they have done. And what a great favour Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), has done in assigning these saintly persons as our leaders, that if they were not there and would not have taught us the manners and etiquette of prayer recital, then how and where could we have learned the ?etiquette of speaking to Him, the code of prayers, and the manner of thanking him

,And, if they were not there

then how we could have learned about our negligence and shortcomings as regards to the codes of servanthood, and our helplessness in offering appreciation and thanks? If they were not there and would have not taught us all this, then wouldn't we have been living in state of degradation, ignorance, negligence, deviation, and ?brutality

The most important condition is that the supplicant reciting such noble supplications during such blessed occasion must understand what is he saying; neither his inner-self should be in contradiction with his outward appearance, nor his self should contradict his tongue, whatever he utters with his tongue should also be confirmed by his heart, should not be a claimant and liar, and his affairs and characteristics should .not perceive his sayings as lies

By bringing upon tongue and chewing up the phrases and sentences, which are not confirmed by his heart, rather are perceived as lies, should not treat Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), as a plaything or mockery because, speaking to Him in this manner in accordance with the decree of reason and wisdom is close to blasphemy, .rather if one thinks well, it is nothing but blasphemy

In front of Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), whose vast infinite knowledge comprehends everything, and who is more aware, than our own selves about all of our exoteric and esoteric affairs - do we stand, stretch our hands in prayer, and open :our tongue for offering excuse by saying the following

O' Allah! Thou commanded me not to sin and"

transgress, instead I most boldly trampled Your command and stood up in rebellion against You, but in spite of all that You preserved my honour by not exposing my ".shameful deeds and insulting me before others

But in spite of saying the above, if our hearts do not believe, our action and deeds do not confirm and certify whatever is uttered by our tongues; crying and shedding tears, earthiness, and humility, which are the prerequisite for uttering the above are not shown by us, or worst than that, we consider our self as righteous and faithful servants, or feel sad regarding what Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), has done with us...etc. Then with such state of affairs would it be appropriate and decent to utter such words by tongue? Do any wisdom and thinking regard such a behaviour reasonable? And the one who behaves in this manner and speaks so, what does he ?deserve

Let us take a pause in order to better discover our being ungrateful, unthankful, and disobedient. Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), who is our Lord and Master, has invited us for a feast of His benevolence and generosity allowing us to sit near His favourite saints, i.e., He has required us to stand before Him for benediction and supplication in order to be benefited from the table of His blessings and benevolence. Before hand, He has dispatched prophets and imams, so that they could teach us the codes and etiquette of attaining His feast, sitting upon the table

of His blessing, uttering words with Him, and standing before Him for supplication and .praise

Now if, in spite of all this, we stood before Him in benediction and supplication and opened our tongues to utter words with Him, but if our heart was occupied in some other things, our mind and self kept thinking about other affairs, and more often about things which Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), regards as His enemy, remaining amused in those thoughts to the extent, that even forgetting the words uttered to Him, becoming completely naive as to with whom are we talking to and what is being ?sought? What is going to be the result of such ignorance and negligence

In this stage, wouldn't He proclaim: O' you poor deviated ones! Didn't you feel ashamed in treating my invitation so lightly with mockery? Didn't you feel ashamed by the way you talk to Me, that if your own servants, subordinates, and even your enemies would have treated you in this manner, you would have never excused them. Didn't you feel sorry for treating Me so lightly, even lighter than your own servants? Because, you will feel ashamed and would avoid to treat them in this manner, but don't feel ashamed with Me. If such reprimand is issued for us from Him would we ?have any reply

Glory to Allah (Subhan Allah)! Indeed He possesses wonderful patience and great forbearance, that were it not for his patience, forbearance, greatness, benevolence, and kindness, what would He have done

with us for such impudence? Except that he would have shown outburst of his wrath against us, and would have thrown us out from His blessed threshold forever, by confining us into the most horrible and darkest chambers of Hell, in most wretched ?and humiliating disgrace being inflicted with Hell's most severe punishments

Yes! Majority of the people in their supplications behave in such manner, their heart being closed by the lock of negligence, they stand in prayer speaking to Him with the tip of their tongue, while having their heart and soul occupied somewhere else; even worst than this are those, who apparently open their tongue for asking pardon admitting their shortcomings, sins, transgressions, and disobedience, but inside their heart they regard themselves as pious, righteous, and faithful servants, and whatever Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), has done with them about their destinies - they are not pleased with it. A step further than these are those who with their engaging in false supplications, which they do not believe in their heart, make mockery of prayer and benediction. Of course, I don't imagine that such type of .persons could be found among Muslims

Unfortunately, that is the way it is, we stand in prayer in the state of ignorance and negligence, uttering words with the tip of our tongue, while continuously thinking about our worldly affairs from the bottom of our hearts. But as regards to what is He going to do with us and our disobedience with this false supplication

and negligence, is described in the following narration in which the Imam [a] points :out in the first day prayer of the Month as follows

He does not question us for being disobedient, does not expose us, covers up our“ faults, makes our good deeds apparent, does not deprive us from His blessings and favours, does not hand us over to others, closes his eyes from our faults, does not close the gate of repentance upon us, encourages us to offer repentance for the second time and many more times, promises us acceptance and rewards, treats us the same way as he treats his pious righteous servants, prevents others from insulting and exposing us, and becomes angry upon them if they admonish us, does not turn off His affectionate and kind eyes from us, and does not like to see us in the ”.state of degradation

Pause and ponder when you recite this prayer of the first day of the Holy month, :uttering the following sentence by your tongue

I am so hungry for Your love that I would never become satisfied; I am so thirsty for“ ”.Your friendship that I would never become quenched

Do you keep a little bit of it within your heart, whatever is being uttered? Do you have any trace of this friendship in your heart, which is being claimed by your tongue? Do you indeed desire meeting Him in the bottom of your heart? If you are really His sincere friend then inevitably you must be infatuated for

meeting Him; also, the separation from Him must be painful and you must remain in the state of restlessness and anxiety until your eyes become illuminated your with your beloved's sight. Here it is that Imam [a] after recital of the above, in a sentence :saturated with ardent desire, anxiousness, and awaiting says

".How much infatuated I am for meeting the one Who sees me, but I can't see him"

Yes! It is easy to talk, and uttering very good phrases or sentences with the tongue does not require least trouble (or in other words it does not cost any tax), but whatever is being uttered by the tongue, believing it by heart and having no contradiction between our inner and outer selves is something indeed extremely difficult. And whatever is being uttered by the tongue, having committed to it and paying due respect to all the relevant conditions, codes, and etiquette is indeed difficult. Simply compiling beautiful sentences with the tip of tongue and claiming Lord's friendship is something, and with sincerity being infatuated by soul, being His .friend is something entirely a different matter

Are not the friends, seekers, lovers, and infatuated ones of Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), such as have been described by the Imam[a] in this very prayer of the first :day

"Those who are not pleased only with fasting during day and engaging in night-vigil, rather desire to sacrifice their most precious and dearest thing for Him; want to give up their all possessions; are ready to tolerate

the most severe hardships, to walk through the piercing spears, and to embrace the swords and hatchets with open arms; dyeing their hairs and face with their own ".blood, and falling upon the dirt with their bodies torn to pieces

And look whether do you possess a little bit of such passions and ardent desires within you? If you are such, congratulations and thousand of congratulations be upon you, but if you are among those who even regard day-fasting and night-vigilance as uncomfortable, then what to say about having zeal and anxiousness for such things in .their hearts

Therefore, lest you act impudently and shamefully and stand before Allah, (the Glorious, the Exalted), who controls all of your affairs and who sees things much more clearly than yourself in prayer, while lying and uttering things from the tip of your .tongue, which you do not believe by heart as well as are not committed to them

Another thing which a prudent wayfarer should not forget during the first night of this holy month is resorting (tawassul) to the impeccable ones (Ma'sumin)(۱) in that night. It is up to him to stretch his hand sincerely towards the threshold of those exalted saintly personalities, should present their blessed, glorious, and beautiful faces as intercessors for our unblessed and polluted (with sins), faces, thus, looking towards the Lord through their splendour and magnanimity because, it is not appropriate and desirable to look towards Him directly with a face blackened with sins, and cheeks rusted with

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Ma'sumin: In accordance with the Islamic traditions the week days have been - ۱ assigned to the Ma'sumin - those possessing the quality of 'ismat (divinely bestowed freedom from error and sin) i.e., the Holy Prophet [s], His daughter Sayyida Fatimah al-Zahra [a] and the twelve Imams [a] as follows: ۱. Saturday Prophet Muhammad [s] ۲. Sunday Imam Ali and Sayyida Fatimah al-Zahra [a] ۳. Monday Imam al-Hasan and Imam al-Husayn [a] ۴. Tuesday Imam al-Sajjad, Imam al-Baqir and Imam al-Sadiq [a] ۵. Wednesday Imam al-Kadhim, Imam al-Rida, Imam al-Taqi and Imam al-Naqi [a] ۶.

Thursday Imam al Askari [a] ٧. Friday Imam of the Age al-Mahdi [a] For detailed description of their ziyaraats, refer to Mafatih al-Jinan of Late Hajj Sheikh Abbas al-Qummi (R.A.) The night of the day means the night preceding the day, i.e., Friday night .[starts with the evening of Thursday and ends at the break of dawn on Friday [Tr

transgressions. Instead, he should plead with them, should open his tongue full of grief and anxiety, should request them to act as intercessors for pleading his case.

It might be that their hearts would become soft with love for him, with their greatness they might accept him by acting as his intercessors as well as might request Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), that may He accept him and bestow upon him the grace and favour so that he would become the way his Lord desires him to be. Because, Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), being the most Compassionate and most Merciful, undoubtedly would accept the plea and intercession of those compassionate and exalted personalities, especially, those Sinless noble ones, to whom He himself has taught generosity and compassion as well as has allowed them to act as intercessors.

Yes! By resorting sincerely, truly and honestly to these noble exalted personalities one may attain such gains, prosperity, and salvation which can't even be attained through engaging in worship for one complete year. Therefore, it is up to us to make our best endeavours, by treating the time as our best available opportunity; we should extend our hands towards their threshold; by offering salutations and thanks should open our tongues for needs, and saying the following sincerely and honestly:

O' my masters! Tonight you are the support and shelter of everyone, you are the most exalted and generous among all exalted and generous ones, you like inviting guests and want to be generous towards them;

Also Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), has commanded you to provide refuge and shelter for the wretched and unsheltered people; now here is one of the Allah's unsheltered servants who has came to attend your as well as Allah's feast; has attached his heart upon your support and well as Allah's support and hospitality; be hospitable and allow him to sit upon the table of your generosity and treat him in the :following manner

Consider him as your friend and supporter and do not deprive him from your best support and endeavours; do not deprive him from your prayer, backing, and intercession; ask Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), not to deprive him from His Forgiveness and Benevolence; shouldn't deprive him from His mercy and compassion; then look at him with love and pleasure; becoming so happy and pleased with him that after that He should never become unhappy and angry with him, should ....regard him as His sincere friend and worthy servant

O' my masters! Please beseech Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), to bestow upon me these things; He will accept your prayer and intercession, because your splendour and majesty, and your worth and prestige before Him is far greater than what could .be perceived by the human mind and understanding

I swear to you by your splendour and majesty, which Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), has bestowed upon you, to look towards me with kindness and do not deprive me from whatever I have desired; reward me more than whatever I

have asked in accordance with your generosity; don't look upon my worthlessness, disobedience, and deviations, because the generosity of the generous ones and the hospitality shown by the exalted ones are in accordance with their generosity and .exaltedness and not in proportion with the worth and merit of their recipients

O' my masters! You are the ones who have taught greatness to the exalted ones, generosity to the generous ones, and benevolence to the benevolent ones; if there is a discussion about the benevolence you are the first and the last as well as the roots and the branches; if there is a discussion about the magnanimity and greatness you are their fountainhead; you are the ones who never returned any one hopeless and :empty-handed, as you yourself have proclaimed

Your generosity and reward like rain water pour upon the righteous ones as well as" upon the bad ones, likewise;" saturate me with the rain of your generosity, do not deprive me from the rain of your generosity, do not deprive me from the pouring of your love because I am thirsty for your generosity and hungry for your love and affection; you don't like that your guests who have taken shelter in your threshold .and have tied their hopes upon your benevolence should remain thirsty and hungry

O' my masters! If you will deprive me from your hospitality I will die with hunger under your shelter sitting upon the side of your tablecloth. No! No! You wouldn't treat me in ;this manner

you are not the ones who would deprive the guests from your hospitality so that he !would return heart-broken, hopeless and hungry. Never! Never

Yes! It is up to the prudent wayfarer to mobilize all his talents, expertise, strength, and endeavours for resorting towards them; crying and shedding tears, pleading, and requesting for intercession and support with these exalted saintly personalities; so that through resorting for one hour he may earn the prosperity for one year, and through such insignificant efforts might achieve huge gains. Also, he should not forget to repeat this resorting and crying every morning and evening, and by sending salutations (upon them) everyday and resorting to them every night should .strengthen his commitment towards them

The prudent wayfarer who wants to perform recommended deeds (mustahabbat) and supererogatory prayers (nafilah), it would be much better for him first to review his situation, affairs, and work-load in order to find out whether he is in low, moderate, and high mood. After reviewing his situation then he should select the .proper program which is suitable for him

One of the recommended acts which has been emphasised a lot in traditions is to perform supererogatory prayers, especially one thousand ra'kats supererogatory prayer which must be offered during this month.(۱) If the wayfarer's spiritual condition and mood allow him to perform this special prayer what other grace better than this can he ask for? He should perform it and should not forget its relevant ,supplications, because those supplication contain very delicate and sublime themes

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۱ - Regarding how to offer one thousand rak'ats prayer and how much should be offered during each night, there are many traditions and one of the most authentic tradition has been mentioned in Sheikh Abbas al-Qummi's book (Mafatih al-Jinan)*, [Author]. * Mafatih al-Jinan: The standard manual of Shi'i devotion, containing the supplicatory prayers of Imams as well as formulae for recitation at particular times or visitation of the tombs of Imams [a] Its compiler Sheikh Abbas al-Qummi, was a

.[scholar of vast learning who died in Najaf in ١٣٥٩/١٩٤٠ [Tr

.which are not found in other supplications

Of course, he must do his best to recite these prayers sincerely and honestly with the heart's presence and concentration, in a state of being fully awakened, so that his prayers shouldn't be a thing uttered only from tip of his tongue and chewing of words, rather it should indeed be a confidential and humming communication with his Creator. And truly how much blessing and happiness it contains - the supplicant whose condition testifies his saying; whatever he utters by tongue is also believed by his heart, whatever he brings upon his lips comes out from the depth of his soul, and .whatever he says also possesses it

Such supplicant undoubtedly is righteous, acceptable, and dear in Allah's sight. For example: the supplicant who opens his tongue feeling sorry and ashamed, speaks about his state of helplessness and wretchedness, disobedience and ungratefulness, deviation and wickedness, sins and transgressions, boldness and lowliness, and considers himself among the condemned ones, as has been expressed in some of :such supplications

That he himself admits that his heart is so much full of filth and his sins are so severe" that if the earth would have known about them it would have swallowed him; if the mountains would have learned they would have fallen upon his head; and if the rivers would have become knowledgeable about it, they would have caught him in their "..... whirlpool

It could be derived that if a supplicant says such things, and if these

feelings come from the depths of his inner soul and his heart believes in it, even if one happens to be Satan, would become righteous, what to say about a believer and Muslim. Especially, as has been mentioned in parts of these very prayers, that his fear, anxiety, and danger should be because of divine wrath and not because of Hell's .punishment

Yes! If the supplicant in this state as well as in other blessed situations, which have been described in these supplications, whatever he brings upon his tongue also believes in it by his heart, undoubtedly would become righteous, would attain Allah's pleasure, thus, ascending towards the most exalted spiritual stations. But the wayfarer who does not find within himself the required zeal and motivation for performance of such recommended deeds, feels tired and lazy, should take a .penetrating look within his heart, and must thoroughly scrutinize his state of affairs

If he thinks that performance of worship and recommended deeds even if done without interest and willingness would result in his attaining the state of being zealous and happy, certainly he must do it and should engage himself in worship and recommended deeds, lest Satan succeed in taking over his control, thus making him .completely deprived from taking advantage of worship and recommended deeds

Because if some one quits the worship and recommended deeds simply taking the excuse of being tired, and not having the required mood, gradually his affairs reach to the limits, whereby, he completely turns his face

away from these deeds and worships, thus, becoming deprived from their advantages forever. While on the contrary, it has occurred quite often, that someone became engaged in performance of worships and recommended deeds in the beginning with unwillingness and not much inclination and motivation, but during their performance has attained the state of happiness and willingness far beyond than his .expectations

But if he realizes, that at present he is tired and exhausted, and if by quitting the performance of worship and recommended deeds at the moment will result in his attaining a better mood and willingness, later on, he should quit it and should not allow himself to become habituated in engaging in worship and recommended deeds in a state of being tired and unmotivated. Of course, he must watch himself so that his lazy and easygoing self does not trick him to quit the worship performed in the lazy .mood with the hope of performing it later with willingness and motivation

The most important deeds of this month are recital of the Holy Qur'an and supplications, and it is up to the prudent wayfarer to make his best efforts for their recital. Of course, instead of renouncing one of them completely, he should pay more attention towards the one which is more suitable with his mood and situation and brings more illumination and joy within his heart. He should not forget the :supplications mentioned in the traditions as follows

At the beginning of the first night of the Holy Month, should

recite the prayer: "Ya 'Aliyyu ya Adheem", which should then be recited after each prayer. Also one should recite the prayer of "Iftetah", the famous morning (sahar) prayer: Allahuma inni asaaluka min Bahaika", and especially, should not forget the prayer of "Abu Hamza al-Thimali", in accordance with his mood and situation every night or at alternate nights, during the days should recite relevant prayers, and should not forget the recital of Friday supplications and attending the Friday Congregational .Prayer

In his prayers should beseech Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted) a lot for bestowing upon him the grace for appreciation of the Night of Power (Lailatul-Qadr) and Night of Fitr, and during days and nights should pray a lot for the Imam of the Age - Imam :Mahdi [a], by reciting the following

O' Allah! Please grant his wishes for himself, his progeny, followers, subjects, and the" people who are under his guardianship or have some relationship with him. Please fulfill his wishes and let us see this fulfillment, and create a situation whereby the enemies feel scared. O' Allah, please let us join his most intimate followers and old friends, and send salutations and greetings upon him and his impeccable progeny. O' ".Thou, who are the most generous among the generous ones

Also, he should pray for parents, teachers, fellow brother believers, next of kin, neighbours, whoever has a right upon him, all the believers, and should include them .in prayers which he makes for himself

Another important deed of this month is to

take bath (ghusl) during the first night, all the odd nights, and first day. It has been :narrated in tradition that

Whoever undertakes a bath in a running water during the first night of the Holy" Month, and pours at least thirty handfuls of water upon his head, would remain in the ".state of cleanliness (taharat) till the next Ramadhan

And in another tradition taking bath in the above manner has been described as .medicine for the whole year

Comments About the Effects of Deeds .۲

Perhaps acceptance of such narrations which contain matters requiring pause and thinking might be harder for some people and they might interpret them as being incorrect. Such behavior is nothing except not understanding properly about the actions and effects, especially, if they happen to be smaller and insignificant. Otherwise from the point of view of origin and basis what is the difference between the effect of fire which every one believes and does not feel surprised than the effects of deeds and actions? Or what is the difference between the effects of movement of heavenly bodies than the effects of action and movement of human ?beings

Except that, since human beings have heard a lot about the effects of movement of heavenly bodies, and have become used to it, they do not feel astonished and surprised, but since they have heard and known very little about the effects of human actions and movements, and are not familiar with it, feel surprised, astonished, and .are at war

Because the less people know about a thing, and

the less they are familiar with it, the more antagonised and disgusted they are. And the more knowledgeable and familiar about a matter they are, the less antagonised and disgusted they feel. How come no one feels antagonised about the impact of ?great and wonderful words or orders relevant to world affairs

Didn't sometimes a word, for example, a word uttered by a tyrant emperor produce thousands of effects like devastation, murders, bloodshed, and plundering ...etc., that their remnant effects remained for quite some time or forever? Why no one rejects the effects of these things? Is it not because they understand these effects and can discover the secret and mysteries of these things through their faculty of reason and ?mind, therefore, accept them without any antagonism

The prophets and the saints who possess a better sense of recognition than our own senses and whose sight is much sharper than our own, see, identify, and report to us the effect and impact of things like taking bath (ghusl) which cannot be seen and .identified by us

Therefore, whoever believes in Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), divine prophets, and considers them as His righteous and exalted servants, should not show any slight doubt about the traditions which have been reported by them, even though they cannot comprehend them through their sense of limited appreciation. Because contradictions and doubts shown about their sayings is a branch of blasphemy which .is not compatible with their righteous belief

Also, it must be understood that to accept and obey

these traditions and relevant commands which are far deeper than to be comprehended by our limited sense of perception and level of understanding deserve more worth and merit as compared to acceptance and obedience of those traditions and commands which could be easily understood by our knowledge and thinking. Likewise the sincerity relevant to such deeds which are beyond comprehension through human mind is far superior than the sincerity related to other usual deeds. Therefore, from these considerations we should not act negligently in their performance or may wish to quit them, instead, we should make our best endeavours .in their commitments much more than the performance of other deeds

Yes! the Holy Qur'an and traditions have confirmed the authenticity of the effects of ablutions (wadhu) and bath (ghusl) upon the behavior and affairs of human beings, and it was from this consideration that in proportion to their effects, some of them .were made compulsory while others were proposed as recommended deeds

From some of the traditions it can be derived that some of these rituals of cleaning (taharat) contain celestial illumination which would be beneficial to their owners especially on the Judgement Day. In accordance with some of the traditions, they possess celestial physical existence like the physical existence of human beings and things, who would become manifested to their own masters, would approach them and would release them from Hell's punishments as well as from other hardships on the Judgement Day. It has been mentioned about a perfect gnostics that

his celestial illumination of ablutions (noor al-wadhu) became manifested for him in .this world, and he had seen it in the form of a wonderful illumination

Yes! There are plenty of traditions confirming the actions and deeds of a human being acquiring features, body, life, conscience, and awareness in the hidden world; they visit their masters, speak to them, become affectionate with them, interceded for them, and encourage them reducing their fear...etc. And the one who believes in Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), the Holy Prophet [s], the Judgement Day, and believes whatever has been told about the Psychic-world (Barzakh), must also believe about .such effects of human's actions and deeds which have been reported in traditions

(Fast–breaking (Iftar .۳

Earlier it was described that in accordance with their intentions and wishes the fast observers could be classified into few categories, here it should be added that also their fast-breaking differs and could be classified into following categories based .upon their intentions and wants

The one who considers fasting only as a mandatory obligation - a burden upon his .۱ shoulders - and in order to be freed from Hell's punishment or attaining Paradise, somehow tolerates it till fast-breaking, as well as during fasting limits himself to the extent of renunciation of eating, drinking, and other jurisprudential limitations whose violation would result in the fast's cancellation, inevitably his fast-breaking too would be feeling relieved from the burden of obligation assigned upon his shoulders, escaping from the pain of hunger and thirst, getting rid from the limitations

.of fasting, and being able to be benefited from the pleasures of eating and drinking

The one who observes fast for the sake of Allah's pleasure and attaining higher, .۲ exalted spiritual stations, and not simply renouncing eating and drinking and observing other jurisprudential limitations responsible for the fast's cancellation would abstain from every forbidden and undesirable deed, after fast-breaking, would allow upon himself only a portion of things renounced during fasting like eating and drinking, but would continue to abstain from a portion of other acts and deeds. His aim from eating and drinking in addition of pleasure would be - that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), has permitted their consumption, and because of the fact that eating and drinking increases man's strength, thus, making him better readied for worship and enlightenment, which further provides a background for obedience of divine .commands

The one whose fasting has been described superior than the abstinence already .۳ mentioned - is the abstinence from whatsoever prevents him from Allah's remembrance even thoughts and ideas which are perfectly legitimate and allowable. Inevitably the fast-breaking of such a person will be for the sake of Allah, in the path of Allah and with the remembrance of Allah; neither he would eat anything with the intention of enjoying its taste, nor he would eat more than his requirement, also this .would not prevent him from Allah's remembrance

Now let us take a pause and think that if our fast-breaking, eating, and drinking are done for the sake of

pleasure, especially, if they are accompanied with over-eating, then this will be tantamount to an animal act, of course, if it was arranged through lawful means and lawful income, and if it consists of forbidden means and forbidden money, then in that case it will be even lower and degrading. But this same fast-breaking, eating, and drinking, if is done with the intention of obedience of divine command, for having the required physical strength in order to be able to engage in worship, thus, attaining Allah's nearness, then in that case it will tantamount to the deeds of prophets, imams, .and angels

Therefore, we must be careful and must strive that our eating and drinking should be like those of the prophets and imams and not like those of the animals and beasts, because, the prophets and imams even though enjoy eating and drinking as per the dictates of their human nature, nevertheless, pursue far deeper intentions and .objectives

As their worldly lives, utilization from worldly bounties, and looking at world all indicate something very different, i.e., even though these exalted personalities live in this same world, and in accordance with their human nature, inevitably take advantage from world's bounties, but their worldly lives and utilization of worldly bounties and pleasures never make them negligent towards Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), His .remembrance, seeing Him and thanking Him

Because they do not look upon worldly bounties and material pleasures from the point of view of their being just bounties and pleasures, rather

they see in them the manifestation of Allah's Glory, Affection, Providence and Mercy and indeed, see Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), Himself and recite the following :verse

".I see Your manifestation in everything"

:And the following

"When I look at the ocean, I see You in the ocean,

.When I look at the desert, I see You in the desert

Wherever I look at the plain and mountain, I see the manifestations of your elegant ".stature in them

Baba Tahir -

That is the way they see the manifestation of Allah's glory in the universe, and it is because of their seeing Him, in the world and its bounties that never makes their eyes tired, instead gives them pleasure and joy. Yes! Their pleasure and joy from worldly manifestations, and their point of view regarding material phenomenon is nothing except the above-mentioned interpretation. If they are happy with the world it is because of the fact that they see this world's happiness from Him, and if they look at the world with affection - it is because of seeing their beloved's glory in the mirror of :this world, as the famous mystic poet Sa'di has said

"I am happy with the world because I see this world's happiness from Him,

".I am the lover of this whole world because this whole world is from Him

And if they sit to enjoy the beauty of the world's garden, it is because of their plucking the flowers of His glory, as has been described by the most celebrated mystic poet Hafiz al-Shirazi

:(.R.A)

?What is my desire from looking at the world's garden“

”.It is to pluck the flowers of Your glory through the eyes

(Hafiz al-Shirazi(۱

(Eating Before the Dawn (Suhur .۴

Eating before the dawn is a recommended deed of fasting, and it has been narrated in :a tradition

Eat before dawn even if it be only a drink of water, because Allah sends salutations“ ”.upon those who eat before dawn for fasting

During awakening for eating before dawn, in addition to the recitals of invocations (dhikr) and special prayers, recital of Surah al-Qadr (Power) carries plenty of reward, :and it has been narrated

Every believer who observes fast, and at dawn (sahar), and fast-breaking (iftar)“ recites Surah al-Qadr (Power), during the period dawn and fast-breaking is like the ”.martyr who is wallowing in his own blood

Of course, we should keep in mind that our aim for eating at dawn is to perform a recommended religious act, as well as it provides us required strength in order to .enable us to observe the fast

Prayer for Understanding the Nights of Qadr and Fitr .۵

One of the most important prayers and requests which a fast observer should not forget, and from the very beginning of the Holy Month every night, day, and at every available opportunity should beseech Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), is to bestow upon him the divine grace for worshipping, servitude, and night-vigil during the nights .of Qadr and Fitr

And if a fast observer beseeches Him honestly and sincerely undoubtedly He will

respond to his request and would not deny him his desire for having the divine grace - the

p: ۱۱۹

Hafiz al-Shirazi: The supreme master of Persian lyrical poetry, ۷۲۶/۱۳۲۵ ۷۹۲/۱۳۹۰. His -۱ verse is marked by a rich interplay between different levels of meaning - mystical and .[profane, personal, and political [Tr

grace which is so great that deserves merit - and the one who has trust in Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), and the Holy Qur'an, in order to be sure for its attainment would be ready to spend that entire year in worshipping, night-vigil and asceticism. Did not the Holy Qur'an consider that night better than thousand months which are longer than eighty years? Would not by efforts and endeavours of one year, he ?accomplish the bonus and reward of eighty years

Which is indeed a great profit, what to say to accomplish that same profit of eighty years during a period of less than a month. From this consideration, if someone does not have even so much courage to pray and request for the divine grace of comprehension of the Night of Power (Lailatul-Qadr) during the span of approximately twenty days (from the beginning of the Holy Month until the Night of Power), then he should realize that his heart is sick and his faith is unstable, and therefore it is up to him to seek the treatment for his heart's sickness and faith's instability. Whatever has been said about the Night of Power (Lailatul Qadr) is also :valid for the day and night of Eid-ul-Fitr because Imam al-Sajjad has narrated that

".(This night (Night of Fitr) is not less valuable than the Night of Power (Lailatul-Qadr"

Yes! Allah's devoted servants whose desire and courage is that through their prayer, worship, and preparation reach to the point whereby their esoteric eyes become

opened during these nights so that they could witness the descent of angels, (Archangel Gabriel), and destinies descend from the Celestial Kingdom towards the earth during this night. And as compared to those great ones are we who do not possess even the courage to pray and request for the divine grace of worshipping .during these nights

Night of Power (Lailatul–Qadr) and Appreciation of its Merits .۶

It is true that we do not know exactly, as to which night is the Night of Power (Lailatul-Qadr), but this should not prevent us from praying and requesting for its comprehension, of course to identify as to which night is the Night of Power, it has been narrated that from the beginning of the Holy Month till the night of twenty third, Surah-۴۴, al-Dukhan should be recited one hundred times or Surah-۹۷, al-Qadr should .be recited one thousand times every night

Also, for better comprehension of the Night of Power (Lailatul Qadr), there is a narration in the book of Iqbal, whose authenticity although is questionable, nevertheless, because of the profound importance of the Night of Power (Lailatul-Qadr), to act in accordance with the tradition, assuming its authenticity as correct :would be reasonable. The summary of the tradition is as follows

:[Ibn Abbas has quoted from the Holy Prophet [s

I teach you a prayer (salat) that if you performed it, you will see the Night of Power" :(Lailatul Qadr) every night, twenty times or even more in the following manner

Four rak'at prayer with one salutation (Salam), in every rak'at one time Surah al-,(Fatihah (the Opening

three times Surah al-Kafirun (the Disbelievers) and three times Surah al-Ikhlas (the Sincerity). After finishing salutation, recite the tasbeeh (praise) of Fatimah al-Zahra [a] thirteen times, and recite the invocation Astaghfirullah (Oh Allah, Forgive me) thirteen .times

The aim of the narration is not explicitly clear for us, and perhaps what is meant by seeing twenty times or even more Night of Power could be, that for someone like this, there is a reward, which is equivalent to the pleasure of seeing the twenty Nights of Power or even more. For example, it has been narrated that the reward of recital of one praise (tasbeeh) is greater than the Prophet Solomon's [a] Kingdom. But the interpretation of those who think that the reward of this prayer (salat) is equivalent to the reward of worship and night-vigil of twenty or even more Nights of Power .(Lailatul-Qadr) is not correct

(Witnessing of the Night of Power (Lailatul–Qadr .٧

If it is asked what is meant from seeing the Night of Power (Lailatul-Qadr) and its pleasure? The reply is - that seeing the Night of Power means witnessing, whatever is being revealed during that night, seeing the descent of angels and destination of affairs, exactly as they are seen by the Imam of the Age (Wali al-Asr [a]) during this .night

Here it should be briefly explained that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), has created between the 'Worlds of Spirits' (Arwah) and the 'World of Bodies' (Ajsam) another world known as the 'Psychic World' (Barzakh or Mithal) which neither possesses the darkness and narrowness

of the World of Bodies nor has the brightness and vastness of the World of Spirits. It is neither like the World of Spirits which is completely separate and abstract from the darkness of matter, confinement of physical bodies, and limits of quantity, nor it is like the 'Material World' which is completely confined into the darkness of matter, confinement of physical bodies and quantitative limits, rather it is free from the darkness of matter, but still is confined to the limits of shape and quantity, it is a world .free from matter but with shape and quantity and in itself contains many worlds

Every existence which exists in the 'Material World', in addition to the physical and material existence of his own world, also possesses different kinds of existences in the 'Psychic Worlds'. And every existence before his being created in this 'Material World' possessed relevant existence in the 'Psychic World' and before that in the World of Spirits in its appropriate form. In other words every existence, first exists in :the hidden divine treasures as has been described in the following verse

.And there is not a thing but with us are stores thereof“

”.And We send it not down save in appointed measure

(Holy Qur'an (۱۵:۲۱ -

From there this existence descends into the 'Psychic World' and from there, through divine angels further descends into the 'Material World', i.e. whatever exists in this 'Material World' was descended from the 'Psychic World' and whatever exists in the 'Psychic World' was descended from the

.hidden divine treasures

Therefore, every human being whatever destiny or gains he possesses, are from these three worlds; although, majority of the people are negligent about their own 'Psychic' and 'Hidden Worlds', and are not even aware of their negligence, i.e., they neither know about the existence of these hidden Worlds nor are they aware that they themselves the possess existence in these worlds, except those upon whom Allah (Glorious, the Exalted), has bestowed His special grace to recognize them and their selves, and through the path of self-recognition could also recognize their .psychic and spiritual hidden existences

Because the reality of human self is rooted in the Spiritual-World, therefore, from this consideration, the one who has received the divine grace, is able to remove the material curtain from his spirit and self, thus, seeing the self's reality, without matter, in the psychic from, and may go even further deeper than this stage, whereby being able to see the spiritual reality of his self without any shape. Such recognition of the self is the meaning of the following narration quoted from the Commander of [a] the :Faithful Imam 'Ali

".Whoever has identified his self in reality has recognised his Creator"

Therefore, only those who have discovered the reality of their selves in this manner may truly appreciate the link and interface between the self's identification (khud .(shanasi) and Allah's identification (khuda shanasi

It will be sufficient to conclude this explanation at this point, and would be appropriate to return to the earlier discussion. It should

be added that from the traditions it can be derived that commands, and destinations for every year, i.e., sustenance, provisions, age, and one year lives of all worldly and earthly creatures are assigned during the Night of Power and through the divine angel are descended to this 'Material World', and the one who is Allah's Vicegerent (Khalifatullah) upon the earth sees and identifies these descent of destinies upon earth, i.e. it becomes clearly manifested upon him, and this very manifestation and seeing and identifying the descent of destinies upon earth though angels is called seeing the Night of Power and the joy and ecstasy felt by the seer, is the result of this manifestation, which could only be described by those who have experienced such phenomenon, and perhaps seeing of the Kingdom of Heaven (Malakut) by Prophet Abraham [a] which has been mentioned in the following verse of the Holy Qur'an .might resemble such manifestations

".So also did We show Abraham the power and laws of the heavens and the earth"

(Holy Qur'an (۶:۷۵

Inviting Others for Fast-breaking (Iftar) and Acceptance of Their Invitations .۸

One of the most esteemed etiquette of this month is to invite a fast-observer for fast breaking (iftar), whose profound reward as described by the Holy Prophet [s] in the Sermon of Sha'baniyah, was mentioned earlier. Of course here too like other deeds and worships, what is more important is the sincerity of the deeds, and the one who wishes to perform this act must strive that his aim and intention should be only for Allah's pleasure as well

as to follow divine etiquette and manners regarding this month. Has not Allah invited his servants for a feast in this month and Himself taken the responsibility of their ?reception and hospitality

Therefore, to be host and to invite others for fast-breaking (iftar) and food at dawn (Suhur) are divine acts and etiquette). Allah forbid that one should perform these acts with the intention of hypocrisy, egotism, publicity, and even for the sake of the reward in the hereafter, or should perform these things because of the influence of following local customs and prevailing etiquette of the society. And since, how to give iftar, type of food, how to treat the guests, who should be invited, etc., all are effective as far as the aim and degree of sincerity or hypocrisy of the host are concerned, therefore, while beseeching Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), for help he should be careful and pay attention towards all these details and in their selection nothing should interfere .except Allah's pleasure

Similarly whenever one accepts other's fast-breaking invitation, lest in acceptance of his invitation nothing should interfere except sincerity and Allah's pleasure, and in attainment of this sincerity, one should make his best endeavours, because, quite often it might happen, that by sincere acceptance of a believer's invitation and sincerely sharing the table with a fellow Muslim one may have access to such huge rewards and profits which cannot be achieved by worshipping of several years or .deeds

Because, what is more heavier than everything else in

the acceptance of deeds is this very sincerity and cleansing and not the abundance and frequency. Was not it that Satan's thousand years of worship in acceptance of his deed was weightless but one single repentance of Adam [a] with sincerity was responsible in his attaining divine acceptance, and therefore, it is because of this reason that righteous Allah's servants strive their best for attaining sincerity and purity in their deeds, and not for their repetition and abundance.

(The Leadership (Imamat) and Preaching (Va'iz

point

The other most esteemed etiquette of this month for religious scholars, jurisprudents, congregational prayer imams, and preachers is to preach and admonish, and in summary – the scholar who has spent years of his age in the path of achieving knowledge and asceticism, and through the experience of these long years has identified Satan's astonishing tricks as well as the self's unique plans for entrapment of human beings – it would be appropriate for him to preach and admonish and should not deprive the people from his guidance and rich experience.

Because, the gains and benefits received by others through these preaching, guidance, and admonishment cannot be accomplished through any other religious deeds. And it is therefore, from this consideration, that the religion has recommended it profoundly, and in this regard, there are plenty of traditions, narrated from the sinless Imams [a], which cannot be described here. Of course, in preaching and leading the congregational prayer, what is more important than any other thing is sincerity, purity and abstinence from egotism

.and hypocrisy

Especially, preaching and admonishing which are relatively more esteemed acts and are more beneficial as compared to other deeds, unfortunately they are more .vulnerable to injuries and calamities as compared to other deeds

Therefore, from this consideration the one who wants to perform this act, first of all must examine himself thoroughly, and if does not have any other motive except Allah's pleasure and people's guidance - he should undertake it. But if he discovers other than this, then instead of engaging himself in preaching, with sincerity and purity of heart, should engage himself in self-purification and self-refinement. And if he does so, Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), in accordance with the following verse of .the Holy Qur'an would bestow upon him the required grace to succeed in this task

".And those who strive in Our (cause), We will certainly guide them to Our path"

(Holy Qur'an (۲۹:۶۹

?How to Examine Sincerity .۱

The one who wants to know whether his preaching and Imamat (of the congregational prayer) consist of truth and sincerity or not, may undertake the :following test

For example, he should find out why does he like and desire to be the leader of the congregational prayer? Is it because being the leader of the congregational prayer is a respectable job and brings respect, publicity, and distinction for the leader? Or is it because of Allah's pleasure, and for the obedience of His commands? In this manner he should examine himself that whether knowing that more people are participating in the congregational prayer headed by

him, or increase in the number of worshipers accompanying him, or knowing that his followers consist of VIPs, scholars, and wealthy people, are influential in his liking and ?desire of being the congregational leader

That is, under these circumstances and situations does he prefer and enjoy more to be the leader of the congregational prayer, as compared to the conditions whereby very few people are aware of his Imamat, very few worshipers offer prayer behind him, or the worshipers accompanying him are not scholars and great personalities rather are ordinary people? If such was the case, than he should know that his desire to be the leader of the congregational prayer is altogether for the sake of fame and .hypocrisy or at least is contaminated with these things

And if Satan and the imperious self, whispers in your heart in justifying the correctness of your above-mentioned acts misguiding you in this manner, that your liking for increase in the number of worshipers, or their being from scholars and nobles are because of the reason that such congregational prayer possesses more reward as well is a manifestation of religious grandeur, which as a result would earn more divine pleasure. One should not be cheated so easily with this justification, .instead should conduct another self-examination

For example, in order to test whether his aim is more reward or not, he should imagine that suppose there are two congregational prayers, one only with two worshipers but with certain reasons with more reward, and the other one

with a huge number of worshipers but due to certain reasons with less reward. Which one would he like more, i.e., to lead, the one which has a huge crowd but with less ?reward, or the one with only two worshipers but more reward

And in order to test his aim for strengthening the religious grandeur, he should imagine, that if instead of himself, suppose a certain person's leading the congregational prayer would result in more religious grandeur, especially, if he himself joins that congregational prayer as a follower under his leadership, then even in that situation, would he still prefer for himself to be the leader of that congregational prayer? Or would he prefer to hand over the leadership to him, and ?would join the prayer as a follower

If Satan and the imperious self further trick you that your preference for being the leader of congregational prayer over others under the above circumstances is for the reason that this worship, i.e., strengthening religious grandeur, are the type of worships, in which the believers must compete with each other, and therefore, you too with this intention prefer your being the leader of the congregational prayer over others. Again one should not be tricked easily rather must undertake another self-examination, e.g., he should imagine that if his offering prayer under a certain leader of congregational prayer would result in greater religious grandeur as compared to others following him as a leader of the congregational prayer than which one would he prefer, being

?a leader, or the follower

Of course, having sincerity in such type of affairs is indeed very difficult and complex and its true recognition requires hair-splitting efforts, and it is because of this reason that very often its true identification might remain hidden from someone for prolonged periods, and then because of a certain happening or encounter, the reality :becomes manifested. Following is an example

It has been reported about a certain great religious scholar, that for thirty years he offered the prayer in the first row behind the congregational leader. After thirty years, one day it happened that he found himself standing in the second row of the prayer. Suddenly this feeling prevailed upon him, that today others worshipers will notice him standing in the second row, which made him uncomfortable and awkward. And right at this juncture he discovered, that his thirty years efforts and endeavours for presenting him in the first row of the congregational prayers, were not free from hypocrisy and egotism, and because of this reason he repeated his prayers of thirty .(years, offering them as make up prayers (Qadha

A little bit of pondering at the above story of this combatant scholar, who preferred for himself to be a follower instead of leader and endeavoured to be present in the first row of the congregational prayer for thirty long years, and ultimately having encountered with this contradiction had repeated his prayers of thirty years, indicates that the difference between the sincerity and egotism is so fine and

thin, as well as proves that in order to achieve it, how hard the predecessors have .tried

Whatever has been said regarding the sincerity and truth in leadership is also true for the preacher and preaching which are also susceptible to severe injuries. Are not the injuries of tongue and speech also the injuries of preacher and preaching; are not the injuries of tongue and speech so dangerous, and abstinence from them so difficult, that some of the elders, for the sake of abstinence from it, altogether decided to remain silent, while some of the wise ones from this consideration preferred silence superior than the speech even though speech is undoubtedly superior than silence, and a lot of goodness and benevolence are originated and propagated as a result of .speech

Etiquette of Preacher and Preaching .۲

A preacher should strive his best to speak nothing but truth and have sincerity in his preaching. Whatever earlier was explained for the congregational prayer leader is also valid for the preacher; he must pay attention towards it, in addition to that, he must endeavour to keep himself immune from the tongue's injuries, should not say anything unknowingly, and should not lie about Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), and .[the Holy Prophet [s

The words which give the smell of egotism and self-glorification should not be uttered, the speech which intentionally or unintentionally will result in disturbance, loss, and deviation should be renounced, even though if the deviation of his speech is for the sake of proving a certain clarification, e.g., for

responding to the doubts raised by apostates and hostile elements but those listening to them may not understand and comprehend them properly and correctly, thus, resulting in their becoming further deviated. He should not speak in a manner that the listeners become hopeless because of fear, or on the contrary due to too much hope, .become proud and arrogant

While speaking about the prophets and other distinguished personalities, he should not speak in an exaggerated or rhetorical manner, so that the listener might develop misconception regarding them, or might open their tongue in their criticism. Likewise, he should be careful to speak regarding religious commandments, he should not speak in a manner which would result in weakening of the listener's faith about Allah .(the Glorious, the Exalted), the Holy Prophet [s], religion and Islamic law Sharia

By narration of stories relevant to some thieves, bandits, murderers and profligates, should not teach listeners about the methods of looting, murdering, and debauchery, and by describing the interesting stories of fornication and debauchery should not arouse the feelings of listeners, thus, making them interested in these things. He should strictly be careful in narrating the stories of coquetry upon the pulpit, .especially, if ladies are present in the audience

He should not act like a preacher, about whom it is said, that upon the pulpit, practically demonstrated the method of purification for the listeners, or like another preacher about whom it is said that from the pulpit, even though with the intention of encouraging good

and forbidding evil (amr bil ma'ruf and nahi anil munkar) and prevention from sins, described the most obscene and indecent acts of fornication committed by the sinners. In addition to the above he should try not to be included among those about :whom Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), has said

"?(Enjoin ye righteousness upon mankind while ye yourself forget (to practice it"

(Holy Qur'an (۲:۴۴ -

First of all, before preaching and admonishing people about their self-refinement and self-purification, firstly he must endeavour towards his own self-purification and self-refinement, and only then with compassion and gentleness, being tolerant and kind, and with wisdom should try to preach others, inviting them towards self-refinement and self-purification, lest his words do not match with his deeds and his character does not confirm his sayings. Allah forbid, may he be among those who glorify themselves at the altar and pulpit, before the people but when they resort to their .own privacy, engage themselves in other things

Because such behaviour makes the listeners more impudent for sinning, makes them pessimistic and hopeless towards the preachers and scholars, even damaging their belief and faith about the prophets and sinless imams, and worse then that, very .often, this pessimism makes them disgusted with the religion

If among the listeners, there does not exist any special group which should be preached to in a special manner the preacher should mention Allah's wrath, Hell, and its horrible punishment, in order to scare the listeners from sins, transgressions, and deviations. Of course, while using this

style he should not exaggerate so that the listeners become hopeless, which would result in their becoming more contaminated with sins. And in case, if there are special group present in the audience, that such style of preaching is not suitable for them, either he should change his topic, should arrange for them a separate meeting, or should be careful about their presence, and should strictly avoid speaking anything .which would produce a negative impact upon them

It is narrated that whenever Prophet Yahya [a] was present among the audience, Prophet Zacharia [a] in his preaching always practised abstinence from mentioning about Allah's wrath and Hell's horrible punishments, because, Prophet Yahya [a] was in a state of special spiritual mood, and therefore, was not in a position to tolerate the .listening of such speech

By listening to such words he used to become agitated, perplexed, faint and aggrieved etc. In these type of gatherings the preacher should utilize the method of giving good tidings, and by the reminding the mercy, compassion, blessings, and forgiveness of Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), should make the audience hopeful of divine blessing. Of course, this shouldn't be done in a manner that the sinners become deceived, and with the hope of receiving Allah's blessing and forgiveness become .more impudent in sinning

Yes! The method of encounter of a preacher with his listeners should be like the method of a wise father dealing with his own children. He should encounter them carefully, and should speak in a

manner which is most suitable with their conditions, and that ultimately would result in .their betterment and overall perfection

Wherever scaring them is feasible with their conditions, he should do so, and whenever giving glad-tidings suits with their expediency, he should practice it. Allah forbid, unintentionally, and because of the lack of experience, he speaks and utters words, which are not suitable for the listeners, would injure and hurt their spiritual feelings, and so often, this would result in ultimately their being deviated and doomed .into dark valleys of ignorance

In narrating traditions he should be extremely careful, should avoid reporting traditions whose acceptance is not easy for everybody, or is not expedient for them, and very often would result in taunting and mocking of those traditions, rather taunting and sarcasm of religion, or would make some people pessimistic, thus weakening their confidence in faith. Especially, in these days, in our times when the grudge and antagonism against religion and scepticism is so prevailing and encouraged, and there are those who are being trained systematically to find out any sort of document, so that they could injure and destroy the religious beliefs of the common people, gradually making them pessimistic, weakening their confidence, and .ultimately pulling them towards Paganism

In narrating such traditions, e.g., traditions which describe plenty of rewards for a minor deed, the preacher should be extremely cautious, either he should practice abstinence from reporting such narrations, or should present convincing explanatory commentaries, thereby closing the path of scepticism against

:them. For example, if he narrated the following narration for the people

Whoever offered a certain two ra'kat prayer, for every word and invocation recited“ in this prayer, Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), would award him a palace of pearls ”.and topaz in Paradise

Very often, some people will consider it as irrational and impossible and would be laughing with taunting. In order to prevent such thinking that how come an insignificant act like offering two rak'ats of prayer would earn such huge amount of rewards; for example, he may justify this by giving this argument - has not Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), given all of us the power of imagination and thought, without even our requesting or undertaking any deed that by utilization of this power of imagination we may build thousands of cities of pearl and topaz in our mind. Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), who has given us such power, also possesses this power, that whatever could be imagined by us in our thoughts, in order to have it we perform a certain act of worship, thus, changing those imaginations into a real object, having a .physical existence

Regarding the dwellers of Paradise it has been narrated, that whatever they desire is available for them instantaneously, i.e., whatever they imagine in their mind's eyes, see it in front of them. In other words they possess the power of changing their imaginations into real objects having physical existence. Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), who has given this power of changing

the picture into real objects, to some of his esteemed servants, in this world, could .also bestow such power upon his servants in Paradise

Did not the authentic narration report that by the intention and command of Imam al-Rida [a] the picture of a lion upon the curtain changed in to a living lion with a physical existence, swallowed the wicked person who denied the Imam's spiritual power. Did not Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), bestow this power upon Prophet Moses [a] to convert a piece of wood into a living dragon, the power Prophet Jesus [a] to raise the dead into living, and the power upon Prophet Muhammad [s] that through pointing a finger, could divide the moon into two portions? Also, he was able to raise the dead to life, the gravel pieces recited invocation upon his hand's palms, and cured the sick .people

Even plenty of phenomenon and astonishment which we all imagine in our thoughts or see in our dreams as far as their basis or existence are concerned do not differ very significantly with the real and existing phenomenon, with the only difference, that whatever is seen by us in the state of awakening are identified as permanent and forever, while whatever is seen by us in our dreams is considered as occasional. But suppose it was opposite, i.e. whatever was seen in the dream was permanent and forever and whatever was seen in the awakening state would have been considered as occasional, then in that

case would we have imagined dreams as real, and the state of awakening something ?as unreal and imaginary

Whatever has been explained above would prove that with the offering of two rak'ats of prayer giving reward of thousands of palaces decorated with pearls and topaz is not something irrational, impossible, and is not something beyond the domain of divine power. Now in addition to this power and potential, if we add Allah's mercy, compassion, love, and benevolence - the mercy and compassion whose infiniteness and vastness in this very world even relevant to His enemies could be seen so clearly - then it would not be too astonishing that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), with His benevolence would bestow upon his servants so much reward for offering an .insignificant deed

In summary, if the preacher could present such rational explanations and arguments, thus, making them acceptable for the listener's mind and closing the doors of sarcasm and taunting, then in that case, there would be no problem in narrating such traditions. Otherwise, it would be for better to leave such traditions, and instead to recite only, those traditions, which do not have areas of doubts, so that no one could .dare to taunt them

Yes! Like a physician who is conscientious and caring about the treatment of his patients especially, if the number of patients is large and their diseases are fatal and hard to cure he makes his best endeavours lest he makes a mistake in the treatment, thus, endangering the life

of his patients, the wise preacher too should consider himself as a conscientious and responsible physician, and the listeners as patients, who are in need of proper treatment in the from of his preaching. And for the treatment of psychological and spiritual diseases of his listeners, he should strive more than a physician of bodily diseases, because, the psychological diseases are more fatal, dangerous, and more .difficult for treatment

Also, it is for the wise preacher that every day and night before starting his preaching he should submit, and surrender his self and his deeds to the sinless Imam [a] of that day and for betterment of his affairs should seek their help, should start his preaching in the name of Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), praising and thanking Him and sending salutations upon those who were bestowed distinction by Him, should take refuge in Him from Satanic and the self's wickedness, then being extremely cautious should undertake his preaching. If he does so, Allah, (the Glorious, the Exalted), would help him and would let his words penetrate through the listener's heart and make his .preaching be pure wisdom, guidance, and illumination

His aim, intention, and endeavours should not be anything except strengthening the people's religious beliefs and making them staunch; should teach them etiquette and manners of religion; should teach them how to respect and pay homage to Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), prophets and imams, buyers of goodness, purity and truth, disgusted with wickedness, evil and sinning; and encourage them

.to practice abstinence from world's allurements and transient pleasures

In order to have easy access to these discourses, as well as in order to increase the religious and spiritual sentiments of the listeners, it would be appropriate to mention the life styles of the righteous ones, gnostics, and distinguished scholars. He should narrate the stories about their worships and servitude, piety and abstinence, fear and hope, love and eagerness, and sincerity and sacrifice of these great ones as well as Allah's love, favour, blessings, mercy, forgiveness, and compassion which was bestowed upon them for his listeners, and in any way should not forget to pay attention towards the eloquence, softness, easiness, fluency, and kindness in his .preaching which is the method of divine prophets

(Night of Power (Lailatul–Qadr

point

The most important thing of this month is the Night of Power (Lailatul-Qadr) - the night which is superior, than a thousand months, one thousand months jihad, one thousand months reign, and the worship in it is superior than one thousand months of worship, (as has been narrated in the traditions). Yes! the Night of Power is a very precious and distinguished night, in accordance with the Qur'anic interpretation it is a very auspicious night; and as could be derived from the traditions, in this night the sustenance and age of servants, and the good and evil of their affairs are destined; the Holy Qur'an was descended in this night; also the angels are descended all over the earth, and when they pass through the gathering

of believers, send salutations and praises upon them, and consider their prayers until .the dawn

It has been narrated that during this night the prayers of all are accepted, and the" :prayer of no one remains unanswered except the following

The one who has displeased and angered his parent and was declared disinherited or .rebellious by them

.The one who has cut off his relationship with his kith and kin

.The one who possesses animosity and vengeance of a believer in his heart

".The one who consumes alcoholic drinks

:[In the book "Iqbal", a tradition has been narrated from the Holy Prophet [s

That Prophet Moses [a] in his prayer said: 'O' Allah! I desire Your nearness and union." 'My nearness and union belong to someone who remains vigilant and awake during the Night of Power.' Replied Allah. Prophet Moses [a] said: 'O' Allah! I want Your blessing and forgiveness.' 'My blessing belongs to someone who is kind towards the .destitute on the Night of Power.' Replied Allah

Prophet Moses [a] said: 'O' Allah! I want to pass through the bridge of Serat on the road to Paradise safely.' 'The safety in passing through the bridge of Serat belongs to someone who pays alms on the Night of Power,' replied Allah. Prophet Moses [a] said: 'O' Allah! I want the trees and fruits of Paradise.' They belong to someone who does not forget to remember and praise Me on the Night of Power.' Replied Allah. Prophet Moses [a] said: 'O' Allah! I wish to have your pleasure

and consent.' My pleasure and consent belong to someone who offers two rak'ats of .prayer during the Night of Power.' Replied Allah

:[In the same book of Iqbal it has been narrated from the Holy Prophet [s

On the Night of Power the gates of Heaven are opened. There for every is no servant" who offers prayer in this night, but Allah for every prostration stores a tree in the Paradise - the tree whose branches and shade is so vast that if a rider travels for one hundred years through its shade he would not be able to cross it; for every ra'kat would build a home for him in Paradise - the home decorated and built by pearls, topaz, and rubies; for every verse recited a crown from the crowns of Paradise; for every praise (tasbeeh) a bird from the birds of Paradise; for every sitting a rank from .the ranks of Paradise

For every witnessing (tashahud) - a chamber from the chambers of Paradise, and for every salutation - a robe from the robes of Paradise would be bestowed upon him by Allah. And at the breaking of the dawn, companions - youthful and sympathetic, houris of Paradise - pure and decorated, servant obedient and well uniformed, horses - most obedient and swift, flowers, greenery, and good smells, running elegant fountain streams, and many other bounties which make the soul pleased and eyes to shine, ".would also be bestowed upon him by Allah

(The Ranks of the Night of Power (Lailatul-Qadr .۱

It may be derived from some of

the traditions that there are ranks and degrees for the Night of Power and each one of the nights of ۱۹th, ۲۱st, ۲۳rd, and ۲۷th may be considered possessing one of those degree. And the night which possesses the most superior distinction, has been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an as equal to thousand months, and whatever is destined in that night wouldn't be changed is the night of ۲۳rd of the Holy Month, which is also known as the Night of Juhanni.(۱)۳۵

And the one who wants that his actions should be exact and precise, better be vigilant during all these four nights. Of course, regarding the Night of Power there are some other narrations as well, but since their authenticity is not confirmed, it would not be .appropriate to describe them here

(Beseeching Allah for Bestowing Readiness for the Night of Power (Lailatul-Qadr .۲

Yes! the one who believes in the religion and respects Qur'anic verses and traditions of the sinless Imams [a], it would be desirable that he should make his best efforts .and endeavours for celebrating this night

The efforts which are desirable and should be undertaken are, that during the whole year before the arrival of the Night of Power, he must repeatedly beseech Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted) to bestow upon him the divine grace (towfiq) to be vigilant during this night; bless him with most esteemed and dearest deeds; consider that night superior than one thousand months for him and may accept from him; make him His most favourite and nearest one during this night; bless him with

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Abu Yahya 'Abdullah bin Onais al-Juhanni: a shepherd from the tribes of Juhan - ۱ arrived before the Holy Prophet [s] and said: 'O' Prophet of Allah! I wish you order me, so that during one of the nights of Ramadhan I come to Madina and offer the prayer.' The Holy Prophet [s] called him on the ۲۳rd night of Ramadhan, and therefore this night become famous as the Night of Juhanni. - Bihar al-Anwar vol. ۹۹ p. ۲۰, and Asad .[al-Ghabe vol. ۳, p. ۲۰ [Author

His love, learning, nearness, union, pleasure, and consent together with health, happiness, and welfare; should be pleased with him in such a manner, that after this .he would never be displeased with him; should make the prophets

Imams, and especially the Imam of the Age (may Allah hasten his appearance) pleased with him; and allocate him to live in Allah nearness accompanied by the impeccable ones, bestow upon him divine favour to succeed in establishing Allah's .obedience and consent, and make his ultimate end Allah's countenance and pleasure

(Preparation For the Night of Power (Lailatul–Qadr .۳

point

The other decent efforts for this night are that before its arrival, the prudent wayfarer should arrange for its preliminaries and necessities, e.g. for worshipping in this night a suitable place, dress, and perfume should be arranged in advance for engaging in private humming communications Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), as well as for communications with his masters, i.e. sinless Imams [a] he should arrange suitable themes and contents; for paying alms during this night should allocate some money, even for the invitation of guests and for payment of alms, he should plan in advance to select the most suitable guests and the genuinely poor people who really deserve .financial support

Let us imagine that if an emperor dispatches a special courier before someone, with compassion and mercy invites him for a special feast, gives him glad-tidings that if he appears in the royal feast with decency and decorum, rewards and magnificent gifts would be bestowed upon him, and the more respectfully he would

behave in the assembly, the emperor too would increase his rewards and gifts in .proportion with his behaviour

Undoubtedly, after receiving such a message this person would become excited and pleased, and in order to prepare himself would not leave any stone unturned, and during this period would mobilize all his resources and efforts to procure whatever is required for being present in such an assembly, so that finally, when that moment arrives, being fully decorated in a respectable and decent manner, he could present .himself over there

The invitation of an emperor is responded in the above manner but how about the invitation of Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), who is the King of all kings - the King of the Earth and the Heavens - has invited us for His feasts; in order to invite us has dispatched his favourite angels, pious prophets and sinless Imams as his couriers. He has assigned His angels to announce his invitation kindly and compassionately to us; has given us the glad-tidings of giving us permanent abode in Paradise in return for sincere worshipping during one single night (the Night of Power); has promised such bounties, which have not been seen by any eye, have not been heard by any ear, and have not been imagined through any human being's mind, as well as has given us the glad-tiding of illumination, ecstasy, majesty, splendour, nearness, union, and countenance, for whose least comprehension and understanding, faculties of reason and thoughts find themselves astonished and

.helpless

Are we among those who have prepared for this night and invitation, the way we ought to be, and must be, in order to attain the eternal blessing and salvation? Or are we among those negligent and idle ones, who do not achieve anything except loss and eternal doom? We must better know that the one who acts naively and lazily, and does not strive to take advantage of the magnificent generosities of this night, when in the Hereafter, would see that those who were zealous, committed, and vigilant during these nights what have they achieved, and what magnificence, splendour and glory have been bestowed upon them. But they would gain nothing except regret - the regret so great and painful that the Hell's blazing fire and its torturous punishments would seem smaller as compared to their regret, and then together with :the losers and eternally doomed ones, would cry loudly

".Ah! Woe upon me! In that I neglected (my duty) towards Allah"

(Holy Qur'an (۳۹:۵۶ -

But on that Day when the gates of repentance would have been closed, there would be nothing left for compensation of the damage, everyone would have seen the ultimate outcome of his deeds, and then feeling sorry and being regretful would not produce any gain. Therefore, we must take a look upon ourselves, and before falling into such regret and grief, must admonish ourselves for being so lazy, naive, and easy going. And before that we are called for accounting and are condemned into the state

of wretchedness and destitution, for wasting our precious capital - the capital through which we could have accomplished most precious and greater gains we better put our .self to scrutiny

Selection of the Most Suitable Deeds .۳.۱

Other desirable efforts of this night are that with the nearing of these nights, one should increase his eagerness for receiving the promised bounties and blessings; should select worships and deeds which are more in harmony with his mood from the point of view of sincerity, heart's presence, and internal purification; in this matter should seek help from Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), and the impeccable ones; and if he cannot diagnose himself what suits his mood properly, he should seek guidance .(from Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), through consultation (istekhara

Meditation and Pondering .۳.۲

After recital of invocations and supplications one should also allocate some time for self-meditation and pondering, of course, this should be done at a time when he is free from whatever disturbs his thoughts like domination of sleep, over-eating, and .pains of hunger etc

Not to be Negligent from Allah .۳.۳

During these nights, one must strive his best to keep thinking about Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), all along the night, and should not forget Him during any part of the night even for the sake of recommended and justified deeds. Also while offering prayer and supplications he should not think about any other thing even though if they .happen to be recommended things

For example, during prayer (salat), one should not think about recommended deeds like building of mosque, cleaning of mosque, and paying alms etc., because all

these are indications of negligence; even during a part of the prayer (salat), he should not think about the next portion of the prayer, e.g. in the state of standing, to think .about the prostration is negligence

He must try to concentrate upon whatever act of the prayer he is performing and should not be negligent about whatever he is doing or reciting. In order to make this task easier, before performing different acts of prayer, e.g. recital or genuflexion (rukoo), first of all, he should think about them briefly and then should perform them. And in case while performing a certain act, negligence dominates over him, and if a .verse or invocation is recited with negligence, he must repeat it again

For example, when he wants to stand towards Mecca (Qiblah) for prayer (salat) first of all, he should think briefly about the wisdom of standing towards Mecca, and then should turn his face in that direction; and when he wants to stand for the prayer, first of all, he should think about the meanings of standing, i.e., his standing is for truth and his resting upon his two feet is the indication of his hope (raj'a) and fear (khouf) about :the acceptance of his worship. When he wants to recite the phrase

".In the name of Allah the Beneficent, the Merciful"

First of all, he should think about its meaning in brief, and then should recite it with his .tongue, and similar is the case with other acts of the prayer

[Resorting (Tawassul) to Ahlul-Bait [a .۳.۴

The

one who wants to be vigilant in this manner throughout the night, must take refuge in the sinless (ma'sum) - the one to whom this night belongs - at the beginning of that night, should stretch his hands towards their generous threshold. With persistence, supplicating in a polite and soft manner, with words and content arousing their sympathies, should beseech them for bestowing upon him the grace of being vigilant .during this night

Then he must surrender and hand over all his existence, reason, heart, self, virtues, deeds to them, and throughout the night, must be careful not to commit anything which is not in harmony with this surrender, because the one who succeeds in it, .certainly would have achieved whatever he aspired for during this night

Crying and Shedding Tears .۳.۵

For the prudent wayfarer who desires, that during these nights his fear, humility, tears, crying, anguish, and lamentation be increased as much as possible, one of the best method is that he should tie his hands around his neck; should pour dirt upon his head; should place his head against a wall; sometimes he should stand and sometimes he should cry; should imagine himself at the scene of Judgement Day; and the way sinners are rebuked with harshness, should rebuke himself accordingly; then he should look towards his right, imagining about the companions of the right hand (ashab al-yamin) and should think about their splendour, majesty, features, virtues, robes, and smells; then he should look towards the left, imagining about the companions of the

left hand (ashab al-shumal) should regard himself among them, thinking about their torturous and painful condition with blackened faces, their swollen eyes, tied hands and feet, and burnt skins; the angels standing in readiness to execute Allah's command to throw him together with them inside Hell; then he should imagine and be :scared lest Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted) orders

Seize ye him, bind ye him, burn ye him in the blazing fire, and make him march in a“ ”.chain whereof the length is seventy cubits

(Holy Qur'an (۶۹:۳۰-۳۲ -

:Then he should cry

O' Thou are the most compassionate, and Thou Who are the shelter of unsheltered“ ”!ones

:And should cry

Where is Your vast blessing? Where is Your infinite forgiveness? Where are Your “ ”?love and benevolence

Then he should cry, should remember His patience and kindness, should think about His infinite forgiveness and generosity, and if Satan wants to make him hopeless should tell him: 'you, with all these sinning and transgressions can't be hopeless about Allah's blessing and forgiveness, which belongs especially to righteous ones and you are not among them.' He shouldn't pay attention to his words, don't let his whispers effect his heart, turn his face from him, take refuge in Allah, (the Glorious, the Exalted), and should pay more attention to his prayer, hopes and needs, and in a hopeful manner should speak to Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted): it is far away from Your benevolence and magnanimity to turn Your face away from someone needy like me, and not to

forgive a destitute and helpless one like me who has stretched his needy hands towards Your threshold, has resorted to Your most favourite ones, with tearful eyes, .and heart and body trembling with fear

Then becoming further hopeful, he should submit his wants before Him, and whatever spiritual exalted position and sublime ranks, like enlightenment, love, union, faith, and piety could enter in his mind, he must beg from Him. And should repeat the :following text as much as possible

O'! Thou Who is capable of doing whatever he pleases, and except Thee there is" none, who could do whatever he desires. O'! Thou are the One Whose great generosities and large bounties are not expansive at all. O'! Thou Whose donations do not decrease anything (from His treasures), and Whose not giving away does not ".increase anything

:Then he should insists more about the same meanings and plead by saying

O' my Lord! if I do not deserve to request whatever I have requested from You, but" Your generosity and benevolence is such and deserve to bestow upon me the grant of my needs. O' my Lord! Your recognition, which You Yourself have taught me encourages me, that I should desire my great needs from You, because, whatever You bestow upon Your servants and provide for them is not because they are worthy of them, and if there is such worthiness, even that worthiness is bestowed upon them by You, therefore, benevolence and welfare could not belong to anyone except You, and if

such is the case, O' Lord! That worthiness and decency, which You bestowed upon Your righteous servants, bestow upon me too, so that I could also achieve this worthiness, whereby my prayers could receive Your acceptance and my desires get .fulfilled

O' Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted)! You are the one that whatever You do, no one can question You, and there is no one who could dare to raise a finger of criticism. Or could challenge You in Your Power and Reign, You are such that neither Your generosity have any limit and boundary, nor Your blessing have any end, therefore, O' Lord bestow upon me worthiness in accordance of Your Power, and make me rich .with Your generosity

O' Thou are the most generous one among the generous ones! O' Allah (the Glorious the Exalted)! If You want to punish me, instead, punish one of those who don't believe in Your divinity and keep enmity towards Your friends. Come on and punish him, but as far as I am concerned, can I find anyone else except You to pardon me? O' Lord! Would You deprive me from Your generosity ? Or there is no need for You to punish and take revenge but as far as I am concerned, I do need a lot of Your forgiveness .and generosity

O' my Lord! Your enemy as well as my enemy, Satan desires that I become deprived from Your supplication and prayer and, thus, become pessimistic and hopeless from Your blessing and

generosities, but I, because of Your grace have turned off my face from him, and trampled over whatever he desired. Therefore, help and support me over him, because in spite of his whispering I didn't become hopeless and never turned off my .face from You

O' Lord! With my little comprehension about Your blessing and forgiveness as well as Your being needless and omnipotent, I don't believe that You will deprive from Your forgiveness and pardon, anyone of Your servants even the pagans except the enemies of your favourite ones who have oppressed your saints and tortured them but as regards to the punishment of others, if it was not the surrender and obedience to Your book and Your prophet's words, I wouldn't have believed; that regarding the punishment of unbelievers, you have stated in your book that they will be punished; from the point of view of my reason - the reason which you have bestowed upon me - in case you decided to punish them to fulfil Your warning against them, You are not .helpless to do so

But if You don't act in accordance with Your warning, by not punishing them, then even in that case, there would not be the least interference in Your Exalted essence and perfection. O' Lord! I presume so about the unbelievers, then how come shouldn't be hopeful about the believers who have taken refuge in Thee, have put their trust in Your generosity, and desire Your union, even though they might have sinned

?and acted disobediently

O' my Lord! My Master! Sinning is from the servant and forgiveness is from the Master, especially, if the Master happens to be Exalted and beneficent like Thee. O' my Lord! This is what I presume about Your generosity and kindness towards Your servants, during other months, days, and nights, and therefore, I am hopeful. But during the Holy Month of Ramadhan on the Night of Power, which You have created for the sake Your special generosities and blessings; have bestowed a special favour upon Your servants; have given glad-tidings of Your forgiveness and mercy to the sinners; have opened the gates of Your benevolence and magnanimity towards all; have spread the tablecloth of your forgiveness and blessing for all; can I say except that - You will reward everyone with pardon, forgiveness, love and blessing; would grant their wants; would accept their prayers; would reward their evils with goods, and their sins with good deeds; and would let Your greatness and magnanimity to ?surpass their limits - what else can I presume

This is my optimistic presumption towards You, and that is my favourable opinion about Your kindness and magnanimity; You Yourself are knowledgeable, that Your great Prophet has given what glad-tidings for those, who have favourable opinion ".about you

(Some Other Deeds to be Performed During the Night of Power (Lailatul-Qadr .۴

point

It is up to the prudent wayfarer to offer two rak'ats of prayer (salat) each one of the .۱ Nights of Power; in each rak'at after surah, al-Hamd, the Opening, should recite surah al-Ikhlas, the Sincerity, seventy times, and

:after salutation, should recite

".O' Allah! Forgive me and accept my repentance"

.And then should ask about his wants and desires

Then he should offer ۱۰۰ rak'ats special prayer for the Night of Power, and in .۲ between should recite the supplications which have been left by the sinless ones (ma'sumin [a]) - the prayers which are extremely precious and valuable, contain most subtle discourses, delicate points and exalted learnings about Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), His Characteristics, Sacred Names, Generosity and Beneficence, Wisdom and Justice, divine will and destiny, etiquette and manners of supplicating to Allah; all of which are heavenly revealed, and except prophets and imams, who learned them .through revelations, no one else has access to them

Comments About the Prayer's Etiquette .۴.۱

Of course, it should not be forgotten that these supplications should be recited in the state of being completely awake, aware, conscious, and with a live heart; blessed is the one whose recital of this prayers with a live heart is influential upon his heart and soul; whatever is uttered by his tongue is also accepted by his heart and soul; that if for these supplications there do not exist any reward and blessing, except only this effect upon his heart and soul, even then it merits, and one should mobilize all his energy, strength, efforts, and all over crusade with heart and soul in order to accomplish this effect. But in addition to that for each word and phrase there are rewards, blessings, and illuminations - the rewards and blessings which no one

.has the capacity to measure

Therefore, the one whose recital of these supplications do not produce any effect upon his heart and soul, at least should recite them consciously, should ponder about their meaning, must endeavour in order to comprehend as to what did he read, what did he say, and what did he want, lest he recite them with negligence with the tip of his tongue, like the magicians who utter nonsensical, meaningless words from the tip of their tongue, without knowing what is being uttered, what is said, and what is .wanted by him

And the one whose recital of these supplications neither influences his heart and soul, nor he hesitates in their recital; does not even care to understand their meanings, instead of reciting these supplications, should cry about his own worst condition and should shed tears upon this heavy tragedy - the tragedy of not receiving divine grace in supplications; his being unable to appreciate these supplications, and not being able :to be influenced by them, should recite the following sentence several times

" .We are from Allah and towards him is our return"

(Holy Qur'an (۲:۱۵۶ -

:which is recited at the time of occurrence of a tragedy. Further he should say

I seek refuge in Allah from this tragedy, which is horrible and would bring a severe" ".punishment

In a divine tradition, it has been mentioned about the characteristics of the people of :the next world

Their prayers ascend upwards and reaches Allah, their words are accepted, and" Allah loves to listen

".to their prayers the way a mother likes her own child

:Therefore, we should be careful and should ponder about this sentence

".Their prayers ascend upwards"

Is not it shameful that the prayers which ascend upward should be recited from the tip of the tongue, while the heart and soul remain occupied in worldly affairs? Is not it disgusting that we seek Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), from tongue and seek world by heart -the world which in traditions has been called Allah's enemy as well as the enemy of His friends? Is not it helplessness and disobedience that our tongue's tip remains busy in his remembrance while the heart takes off towards the world? Does ?there exist any greater tragedy than this one

۳. Open the Holy Qur'an, recite its special prayer, place it upon your head. and your intention in doing so, in addition to showing respect and regard to the Holy Qur'an, should be that through this means, reason and thoughts become strengthened and .the illumination of reason becomes perfected with the illumination of the Holy Qur'an

۴. The salutations (ziyarat) of the Lord of the Martyrs, Imam al-Husayn [a] should be recited during this night, some other ziyarat which have been which have been .narrated by the Sinless Imams should also be recited

۵. the recitals of surah al-Rum, al-Ankabut and al-Dukhan from the Holy Qur'an should .not be forgotten on the night of ۲۳rd Ramadhan

۶. The special supplications which have been narrated should be recited, especially, the supplications, which has been

:quoted in the book of Iqbal from some authentic books and begins as follows

O' Allah! If, about this night and the nights before, there is a doubt or reluctance in“ their being the Nights of Power, but regarding, Thee, Thou unity (Tawhid), and that because of Your Exaltedness and Magnanimity, You will purify your servant's deeds ”.there is absolutely no doubt

If, one could discover truly the meanings of the above content that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), and in His unity there is absolutely no doubt and contradiction - indeed he has received a good reward for his worship of this night. Also, one should not forget recital of a short prayer which has been mentioned in the book of Iqbal quoted :from Imam al-Sajjad [a] and which starts with

O Intrinsic Fundamental (Secret) evident in His Expose intelligible expression“ (Manifest), and O Rational Exposition (Manifest) leading to His genuine quintessential ((Secret).”(١

.Which, while being short is a very subtle Monotheistic prayer worth reciting

Comments About the Importance of Ahlul-Bait's [a] Supplications .۴.۲

I swear that if we did not achieve any benefit from the existence of Sinless Imams [a] except these very higher learning, subtle themes, and delicate points regarding Monotheism - which they have explained to us, even then it would have been desirable to mobilize all our efforts and strength for their thanks and appreciation, while accepting and admitting, that these thanks and appreciation would not be sufficient to compensate for that great blessing, and whatever we do, we would never be able to thank them for that

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This prayer has also been mentioned in the book 'Mafatih al-Jinan' of Hajj Sheikh -١ .[Abbas al-Qummi in the deeds of the ٢٣rd night of Ramadhan [Author

.great blessing the way it ought to be thanked

One should not forget to select a period for having a private union between himself .٧ and his Creator and during this period should concentrate his mind and soul at this point, that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), is completely aware of his helplessness and disobedience as well as is able to rescue him from this wretchedness, because his generosity, magnanimity, love, and kindness do not have any limits; then he should tie his hopes towards His threshold of generosity and benevolence, should look forward towards His blessings and bounties, and should listen carefully to the blowing of the .breeze of His love

A Reminder .۴.۳

Yes! Congratulations and thousands of congratulations for the one who was able to have the divine grace of performing correctly whatever was described. But the one who did not have the divine grace of performing all of them, lest be tricked by Satan :and through acceptance of his whispers, in which he says

You are not the one who could perform all these tedious worships, the way they" ought to be performed, therefore, it makes no sense to bother yourself, leave it and do your own things, because, their incomplete performance would not bring any ".reward for you

In this manner he would quit performing whatever he could have performed, would close upon himself the path of salvation and righteousness forever, and with this negligence and cheating would entangle himself into serious disaster. Therefore, he should not pay attention to these Satanic

whispers and should not show any negligence in performing whatever he could perform, even if it happens to be quite insignificant, because, deeds and worships however smaller they might be, possess illumination and reward, would enable the doer to have the divine grace for performing another deed and worship, which quite .often helps the person to be able to perform complete worship

Be aware that Satan does not have any other aim and objective except to keep you away from Lord's obedience and to cut off your bonds of servanthood. It should not be forgotten that paying attention to Satanic whispers results in heart's darkness, which in turn makes a person lazy and disappointed in performance of Allah's worship; disappointment from performance of deeds and worship results in renunciation of some of the worships; renunciation of some of the worships results gradually in renunciation of all the worships; renunciation of all the worships results in our eternal degradation and doom, except that Allah's generosity rescues us, so that we practice abstinence in following Satan, and because of abstinence from Satan's following, our heart becomes illuminated, thus having the divine grace for worship .and servanthood

Yes, the prudent believer, lest underestimate his good deed, no matter how insignificant it may be, or may consider even a tiny portion of it as insignificant and worthless, and with such presumption renounces it; that such behaviour would not accomplish anything except loss and damage. (Similarly considering his good deeds as big and with such presumption getting

.(himself involved in self-conceit

Also, lest he renounces a good deed because he is not able to perform it, instead, he should perform it, as much as possible; of course, after performance of a deed be it small or big, he should regard it as insignificant while comparing it with Allah's .Exaltedness

Because, the All deed and worship, regarded as insignificant by the servant are considered as much bigger by Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), who very often looks at it positively, and accepts it from his servant, and what is important and useful for the servant is that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), accepts deed, and not its being small or big, because He does accept quite insignificant deeds, rewards handsomely, and this acceptance and rewards mean infinite gains for the doer. On the contrary, plenty of deeds which aren't accepted by Him don't mean anything for the servant. Didn't Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), accept a little worship and repentance from Prophet Adam [a] but reject plenty of worship from Satan, and order him to leave the ?Celestial kingdom forever

Therefore, from this consideration lest, one may regard his deed and worship as big and looks at it with appreciation and astonishment, even though if he has performed worship equivalent to the worship performed through all humans and angels; because considering one's own worshipping as great does not have any gain except its being ruined, and worst then that, it changes deed's illumination into darkness. Similarly lest he regards a

little deed and worship as worthless and may renounce it, because, so often Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), accepts a small deed, and with his acceptance makes it a lot.

4.4. Comments About the Prayers of Others

Whatever has been described so far to strive hard to have more sincerity and truth and to consider deeds and worships as small and insignificant was about the deeds and worships which some one performs for himself; and all this emphasis is because of the reason, that no one should like and accept about himself anything, except, the deeds and worships which are performed with sincerity, and should not account for whatever is not done with truth and sincerity, rather should see it as sinning and transgression.

But lest he regards and presumes so about the deeds and worships of others, because underestimating others deeds not only doesn't produce any gain - the gain which is obtained for underestimating one's own deeds - rather is detrimental, because it produces the background whereby others become discouraged and disgusted with respect to their deeds and worship, thus the doors of goodness and prosperity becoming closed upon them.

Therefore, from this consideration to treat others deeds and worships in this manner is not allowed, instead, for appraisal of others deeds their very apparent value should be considered as genuine. Or even higher than this, Allah's Generosity and Magnanimity should be considered as criteria, and should be presumed so, that very often Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), because, of his Generosity and Magnanimity might accept their

deeds, even if they are not accompanied with truth and sincerity. Also, we should consider the possibility that perhaps Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), because of His kindness and love towards the servants, might accept and grant their prayers, even if they are recited from the tip of their tongue, and not from the depth of their souls. Therefore, from this consideration lest we disappoint and discourage Allah's servant .from His blessing and forgiveness

And thus with such undesirable conduct make him discouraged and with respect to his deeds and worships, ultimately resulting in his quitting worship and servitude. Even if his deeds and worships are not sincere, and are mixed with some undesirable things, it is not too far that this very apparent and superficial deeds and worship - if are not renounced suddenly - performed by a servant would become the basis for breezing the cold breeze of Allah's grace over him, thus, blowing the spirit of reality in the spiritless skeleton of his worships; the illumination of reality radiating upon his soul in such a manner that he would suddenly became transformed, gaining access to the real worship and the reality of worship, from that superficial worship, and attaining righteousness, salvation, and eternal prosperity. I even believe that if an intoxicated sodomite in state of intoxication, would cry O' Allah! and besought Him for help, He .would reply him

The Night of Twenty Seventh of Ramadhan .۴.۵

It has been reported from Zaid bin 'Ali that his father Imam al-Sajjad

a] used to recite the following prayer from]

:the beginning till the end of the night, on the night of twenty seventh of Ramadhan

O' Allah please bestow upon me the divine grace so that I become disgusted with this“ world - the House of deception - and become attracted towards the Hereafter - the House of Eternity - and before the arrival of my death, should make myself readied ”.for the journey towards the Next world

(The Commentary – World Being the House of Illusion (Dar al–Ghuroor .۴.۶

A little bit of pondering and meditation about the above-mentioned supplication, would reveal this delicate point that in accordance with the Qur'anic verses, traditions narrated from the Sinless Imams [a], and whatever has been spiritually contemplated by the mystics, this world is altogether deceitful and whatever we see, in reality isn't as it appears to be, rather it is like a mirage, which is misleading. Therefore, from these considerations it has been called as the House of Arrogance (Dar al-Ghuroor) .(and the House of Deception (Sarai-Farib

Perhaps acceptance of this point might be hard for some, and they may not accept it easily that whatever is being seen by them in reality is not, what it appears to be, rather mistakenly they see a thing as something else. But there are situations, where human perception makes a mistake in seeing a thing as something else, e.g., a spoon inside a glass of tea appears as a broken spoon. If we think, ponder, and pay attention that this mistake of human sight -whose being a mistake, there is the least contradiction with other sights which

.are not mistakes, at least in appearance doesn't differ at all

With this analogy, we can therefore conclude, that seeing a thing as something else – even contradictory to what it is supposed to be is a phenomenon whose occurrence is possible, and is not an impossibility. And if the traditions describe that our perceptions see the world and its phenomenon mistakenly as things – which in reality they are not – then with reference to the above-mentioned analogy, such occurrence and its reality should also be acceptable i.e., the reality that whatever we see in this world, is :not, what it appears to be. Following are some of the traditions relevant to this matter

The traditions which mention the speaking of lifeless solid material, like the . ۱ speaking of stone pebbles upon the Prophet's [s] hands. In spite of the fact that our .senses do not accept the speaking of stone pebbles and other solid bodies

The traditions which describe the conditions of graves, that some of the graves are .۲ full of joy like green pastures, while some of them are like the trenches full of blazing .fires, in spite of the fact that human senses do not see the graves as such

The traditions which describe the role of angels in directing the world's . ۳ .phenomenon, while our sense of perception does not see them

The traditions which mention that the sustenance of all worldly existence including .۴ solids, plants and animals comes from the Celestial kingdom, while our sense of perception

.do not see such a thing

All these traditions describe this point, that in this world, there are plenty of phenomenon which are not perceived by our senses, or are perceived in a different manner. Yes! This world is named as the House of Arrogance (Dar al-Ghuroor), because its phenomenon do not manifest themselves to us the way they really are; rather manifest themselves with forms which do not show reality; with perspectives which lack authenticity, with essence which like a mirage disappears; with stability which is altogether in motion; with realities which like mirage, are imaginations and hallucinations. It deceives its lovers, and presents itself to them in a charming manner; only for the believers for whom the worldly materialistic veils have been removed from their esoteric eyes the world manifests itself, the way it actually is, and they see world's phenomenon the way they really are. Removal of worldly materialistic veils from the heart's esoteric eyes, as have been mentioned in the :above-mentioned tradition means

".Becoming disgusted with the House of Arrogance"

:And seeing the worldly phenomenon the way they are, means

".Becoming attracted towards the House of Eternity"

Since Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), has spread his blessings and forgiveness more than any other period, during these esteemed nights for his servants, and has invited them for worship, obedience and sitting down upon the table of his generosity it is a must for the servants to pay more attention towards the etiquette of these nights, by ,engaging themselves in worshipping and vigilance

they should look forward hopefully towards His Generosity and Magnanimity, and should not be negligent in remembering, that during these nights Satan too tries hard, more than any other period, to keep us away from worship, vigilance, and being .benefited from Allah's blessings and favours

(How to Farewell the Night of Power (Lailatul–Qadr .۴.۷

As was described for the other important and esteemed nights, the Night of Power (Lailatul-Qadr) should also be farewelled exactly in the similar manner, i.e. at the end of the night, one should resort (tawassul) to the Impeccable ones (the M'asumin [a]) - to whom that night belongs - should submit his deeds and worships to those exalted ones, with a heart broken, with grief and shedding tears, should request them to make those deeds as righteous, and should intercede with Allah (the Glorious, the .Exalted), for their acceptance, and thus making them as fruitful

(The Day of Power (Qadr .۴.۸

It should be understood that in accordance with the traditions both the night and day are interconnected, as far as their worth, value, esteem, and splendour are concerned, i.e. if the day is esteemed and honourable, the night of that day also possesses the same distinction and vice versa. Therefore, we must appreciate the importance of the Days of Power and like the Nights of Power, should celebrate them .by sincerely performing worships and righteous deeds

The Last Night of the Holy Month of Ramadhan

point

During this night there are few important deeds and one should make his best :endeavours for their performance as follows

To offer ten rak'ats of prayer for acceptance of this month's deeds and worships. In the

book of Iqbal, it has been narrated from the Holy Prophet [s], that he has sworn that :whoever offered ten rak'ats of prayer during this night in the following manner

The prayer should be offered with salutations after each two (rak'ats); in each rak'at" after Surah al-Hamd, Surah al-Ikhlas should be recited ten times; and in each genuflection (rukoo) and prostration (sujood), recite the four-praises (tasbihatul-:arba'a) - ١٠ times

(subhan Allahi wal hamdu lillahi wala ilahi illAllahu wAllahu akbar)

Glory to Allah, all praises belong to Allah, and there is no god but Allah, and Allah is" ".Great

And after offering the salutations of the last rak'at should recite the following phrase :one thousand times

(Astaghfirullah)

".I ask Allah to forgive me"

:Then in the end he should offer prostration by reciting the following

O' Living, O' Self-existent, O' the Majestic and Magnanimous, O' the Merciful in this" world as well as in the next-world, O' the Lord of the first and the last, forgive our sins, and accept our prayer, fasting, and deeds. He wouldn't even have raised his head from the prostration, but Allah would bestow upon him his forgiveness, would accept from him his Ramadhan's deeds and worships, and would pardon his sins no matter how heavy they might be, because of him would accept the worshipping of his neighbours, and in the end the Holy Prophet [s] said: 'this is the special gift for the men and the women of my community (ummah), and before me Allah has not given such ".gift to anybody

It

would be desirable that all of us should do especially, those who care about others reformation and refinement; because of their being benefited from Allah's blessing of general compassion, they love to guide others towards reformation, righteousness, truth and perfection; for this purpose have selected the preaching as their profession, therefore, they must be ahead of others in undertaking this deed, because, the benefits which are gained by the people due to the performance of this deed are far greater than the benefits received by them in a preaching assembly. Because, undoubtedly, whatever is said in a preaching assembly does not influence all the people present over there what to say about its influence upon those who were .absent and did not listen to the preaching sermon

But the reward of the above-mentioned deed reaches to all the neighbours living in that area, even if their number happens to be in thousands or more. In addition to that the benefit which is gained by someone through a preacher is far insignificant as compared to the benefit of the above-mentioned deed, i.e., forgiveness for all their sins and acceptance of all their deeds and worships performed during the Holy Month .of Ramadhan

Questions and Answers .۱

Perhaps, acceptance of whatever has been described above might be difficult for some, specially, when there is a room for criticism regarding the authenticity of this tradition. In reply it must be said: Yes! The document of this tradition are not so authentic, but do not many traditions narrate that for

performance of recommended deeds, there is no need that tradition's documents should be free from contradiction and be absolutely authentic, and whoever has performed the recommended deeds, described in a tradition although with less ?authentic documents would receive the rewards mentioned therein

If again it is asked: we are not sure, maybe for such type of traditions, their proof of authenticity might not be needed, but how do we know that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), would accept such a deed, and with its reward would even pardon the ?people living in that area, so that we should regard it as superior than preaching

The reply is, that this doubt is also valid for preaching, where the possibility of non-acceptance is relatively much higher, because the preaching is done in people's presence; therefore, is not safe from the danger of fame and egotism, and both these factors play an effective role in making the deed contaminated with the tan of hypocrisy, but the deed described above is performed in privacy and isolation, and .therefore, remains immune from being damaged through these two calamities

Studying Imam al-Sajjad's [a] Affairs .۲

It is desirable to study and ponder, whatever has been narrated about the actions, deeds, intensity of repentance and obedience of Imam al-Sajjad(۱) [a] during this night, in order to find out that such a noble and esteemed personality like him, with all that piety and spiritual grandeur, present himself before Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), for repentance in this manner; therefore how should we -with all this ,disobedience

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Imam al Sajjad [a]: The son of Imam al-Husayn [a] and the daughter of Yazdigird, -۱ the last Sassanid king of Iran, was born in Madina on Saturday, ۱۵th Jamad al'ula ۳۶ A.H. He participated in Imam al-Husayn's uprising and accompanied his father to Karbala being a tragic witness to the tragic event. After his father's martyrdom he was made captive and taken from Karbala to Kufa and from Kufa to Damascus. His speeches and protests on necessary occasions made a manifest the worthiness and

glory of Alhul-Bait [a], the cruel injustice suffered by his father, and enormities perpetuated by Yazid's Umayyads regime. Imam al-Shafi considered Imam 'Ali ibn al-Husayn [a] as the most supreme jurist of all the people of Madina. His book Al-Sahifah al-Sajjadiyah stands out as a profound social work of the time and a reflection of a supreme endeavour to meet the exigencies of spiritual ordeals facing the society at the time of Imam. He died at the age of ۵۸, in Madina; poisoned by al-Walid ibn Abdul Malik Ibn Marwan on ۲۵th Muharram ۹۵ A.H., and is buried in Jannatul Baqi Cemetery .[in Madina [Tr

ingratitude, indecency and intemperance present ourselves before Allah (the .Glorious, the Exalted), for repentance and obedience

The great Sayyid in the book of Iqbal has quoted from Imam al-Sadiq [a], that when" the Holy Month of Ramadhan arrived, Imam al-Sajjad [a] did not admonish his male and female servants for their mistakes, rather wrote all their mistakes in a diary. Then on the last night of the Holy Month, he called all of them and asked them to sit down around him, opened his diary, called their names one by one, saying: 'Do you remember that on that day you made a mistake and I did not admonish you?' The .servant replied: 'Yes! I do remember

Then when he got all of them to admit their mistakes in this manner, he stood up in their midst and said: 'All of you cry loudly saying: 'O' Ali bin Husayn! As you have written our mistakes in your note-book, your Lord has also written about your mistakes, and without even a single mistake being left out, has registered them in a special diary; a day will come when you will be scrutinized in His presence the way we have come before you for scrutiny; now you should forgive us and let us go, the way you desire Allah to forgive you; you forgive us so that He forgives you; you overlook upon us, so that He may overlook upon you; you be kind to us so that He be kind .towards you

O' Ali"

bin Husayn! Here we are standing afraid in your presence, you too should remember the Day when you would be standing afraid in the presence of your Master; the Wise and Just Lord Who would not overlook even the tiny deeds and would bring them for accounting; therefore, you be generous to us, so that He too would be generous .towards you on that Day

He uttered these words himself, so that they could repeat them, they too repeated" these words with their tongues loudly, while he was standing among them, shedding tears, cried, and said: `O' Allah! You Yourself have commanded to overlook and forgive those who have done wrong to me. O' Allah! I have done wrong to my own self, in accordance to Your command I have forgiven and overlooked those who have ;done wrong to me

You too should overlook and forgive me, because, You are most deserving to overlook and forgive; O' Allah! You have commanded us not to oust the destitute from our threshold; here we are destitute, who have placed our heads upon Thy threshold, have put our hands upon the skirt of Your generosity, our eyes are eagerly fixed upon Your love and kindness, please do a favour upon us, and do not oust us disappointed and empty handed from Your threshold, because You are more deserving for mercy .and compassion among all

Then he looked upon them and said: 'I have forgiven you and have overlooked your" mistakes, now will you too over-look

me? And if I was not a good master for you, will you forgive me? That I was not a good, just, and generous master, but I myself am a servant of an Exalted, Merciful, and Compassionate Master.' Then they would respond to him: 'O' our master! We have overlooked and have forgiven you.' Then he said to them: 'please pray and say: O' Allah! Forgive 'Ali bin Husayn the way he has forgiven us; make him free from the '.Hell's fire the way he has freed us from the servitude

And they repeated these words upon their tongues, then he himself said Amen and" said to them: 'Go away, I have forgiven you all, and have made you free, so that my Master too may forgive me and make me free.' In this manner he would make all of them free; since, the Day of Eid ul-Fitr would have arrived, also bestowed upon them gifts and rewards, so that they should not depend upon others for their needs; and there was never a Ramadhan that in its last night, he would not have freed more or .less twenty of his slaves in this manner

He said: 'Allah frees seventy millions sinners from the Hell on every night of the Holy" Month of Ramadhan, and on the last night frees a number equivalent to the sum of freed during all the nights, and I also like to free my servants in this world, so that my Master also frees me from his

punishment on the Judgement Day.' He never kept a slave for more than one year, if he got a slave in the beginning or end of the year, freed him on the night of Eid ul-Fitr brought another one in his place, and when the Night of Eid arrived again, freed him ".too, and he practised this method until the end of his life

Yes! This was the method practised by Imam al-Sajjad [a] for absorbing Allah's blessing at the Night of Eid ul-Fitr, and if we cannot properly execute his method in our lives, it would be desirable, to strive our best to follow it to the extent that is possible. At least, we may write in a diary the mistakes and omissions committed by our children, relatives, servants and others, then on the occasion of Eid ul-Fitr's night let us overlook and forgive all of them and so much better, if we look towards Allah :(the Glorious, the Exalted), and say

Allah! So-and-so, Your slave, did such and such wrong and transgression against me, but I did not take revenge'; and similarly should remember the mistakes and wrong of all of them one by one, and then should say; O' Allah! You know it very well that these slaves of your did these wrongs to me, but as far as I was concerned, only for Your sake did not stand against them, and did nothing to take revenge, with the hope that You too would keep Your wrath and punishment

away from me. O' Allah! You Yourself have commanded us to overlook and forgive others, therefore You too should overlook and forgive us, because, You are far more .deserving for forgiveness and generosity as compared to all of us

O' Allah! You are the one Who bestowed this divine grace upon me to forgive those who have done wrong to me, therefore, please be generous and do not deprive me from Your forgiveness, because that divine grace, which you bestowed upon me is greater than this forgiveness. Therefore, when you did not deprive me from that greater blessing, please, also do not disappoint me from being blessed with your .forgiveness too

O' Allah! You Yourself have commanded me to respond to an act of goodness in a much better way. I have forgiven those who had done wrong to me, I am hopeful that You too will respond to my act of goodness with a much better reward; would free me from Your punishment; with the alchemy of Your love, would replace my evils into manifold goodness, would increase my rank; therefore, complete Your generosity, .and do not disappoint me from these wants

Here, it should be reminded that not executing this method exactly, the way described above, and simply paying heart's attention, although might be useful and effective, nevertheless, its performance in the above manner is far more effective and :possesses many distinctions including

A. As heart's attention towards a deed is considered only as heart's worship, its execution and performance with

tongue and other bodily parts is considered as part's worships, therefore, if we do it in the above manner in addition to the heart's worship, we would also have the worship .of other body organs

B. Further performance of a certain deed by a certain human body organ, produces a special influence upon the heart, thus, exciting other organs to perform other deeds, which in itself creates a background for another deed, and in this manner like a chain reaction, a continuous reward is achieved by the worshiper. It is obvious, that paying .heart's attention only would never accomplish such an auspicious happening

C. Also performance of deed and worship through bodily organs, have this good advantage that it might become an ideal example and model, providing the relevant background for others, who may also perform it, thus bestowing a reward upon us, because, whoever is the pioneer of a decent tradition and desirable work, every time someone would act in this manner, a reward would also be bestowed upon the pioneer of that good tradition. In addition to that, it provides a background, whereby the righteous and good deeds are spread among others, as the method practised by Imam al-Sajjad [a] provided a background, thus enabling it to make its entry among others and, thus encouraging them to perform it. Now, if Imam al-Sajjad [a] instead of performing it in this particular style, would simply have paid attention by heart, then in that case, would we have any awareness about this

.method today, and have practised it? Never

Self Accounting .۳

The other important deeds of this night is self scrutinizing, and it would be so much better and desirable that at the end of the month, the fast observing believer should audit his investment and profit, exactly like two partners who scrutinize their investments and gains at the end of the day. He should look at his investment, i.e., age, faith, blessings and illuminations of the Holy Month of Ramadhan and should find out whether at the end of the month his faith in Allah, (the Glorious, the Exalted), the Holy Prophet [s], and religion has increased or not ? He should think how are his ethics ?and his spiritual condition

He should think whether the Holy Month of Ramadhan has contributed towards the improvement, perfection and maturity of ethics, and affairs like fear, hope, patience, asceticism, Allah's remembrance, enlightenment, love, reliance, surrender, consent, Monotheism, heart's wideness, spiritual contemplation of hidden realities, acceptance of calamities, keeping secrets, detachment from the world, and attachment towards the Hereafter, etc., or not? He should think how are his deeds and character? Has he taken steps towards their betterment? Has he increased his efforts for their correct religious performance ? Especially, he should review his tongue's actions, and should think whether its sins like lying, speaking nonsense, back-biting, accusation, obscenity ?and ill-speaking have decreased or not

If after this scrutiny he discovered that his heart's affairs are still like before, and no ,step forward has been taken for their betterment

he should realize that he has not been benefited from this esteemed month and its bounties, the way he should have been. That his undesirable and unjust actions have closed the path for the illumination and blessings of this Holy Month, thus, making him .deprived from its benefits

Otherwise, it is not possible that illuminations and bounties of this month, especially, the blessing of the Night of Power (Lailatul-Qadr) as well as illumination and bounties of prayers and supplications do not leave any influence upon his actions and affairs. Some one like this should feel sorry for his loss, and from this fear, lest the saying of the Holy Prophet [s], that: "Whoever passes the Holy Month of Ramadhan without his .being pardoned, then there do not exist any pardon for him", might be valid for him

Therefore, he should arise for his reform, should seek refuge in Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), should beseech Him for help, should All stretch his hands towards the threshold of His generosity, with his tongue and from the profundities of his heart :must cry

Or, Who listens to the (soul) distressed when it calls on Him, and who relieves its" ".suffering

(Holy Qur'an (۲۷:۶۲ -

He must honestly and sincerely lament upon his sorry state of affairs, from the :profundities of his soul and mobilizing his entire existence must cry

".There is no god save Thee, be Thou glorified, Lo! I have been a wrong doer"

(Holy Qur'an (۲۱:۸۷ -

His condition should be such that shame and degradation of

wrongdoers, anxiety and fear of sinners should be apparent upon his face. He must request for forgiveness and pardon with the degree of anxiety in proportion to the magnitude of his sins and the calamity inflicted upon him. If Allah forbid, his lazy and deviated self prevents him from offering repentance, at least, his case should not be worst than Satan's; acting exactly in the same manner as he besought Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), and also accomplished his objective - i.e., not to be disappointed from His kindness and generosity, not remaining negligent, in spite of all the damages and deviations, not closing the eyes from the Lord's magnanimity; and in summary in the last night of this month, for compensation and provision of the benefits and rewards - lost by him during the entire month - as well as for reparation of losses and damages inflicted upon, he must do whatever he can, and in this manner should prepare himself for the Day of Eid ul-Fitr - the day for presenting ourselves before Allah, (the Glorious, the Exalted) so that he should not remain empty handed from being benefited from great rewards, because indeed deprivation of them would be a tremendous loss and damage which would be irreparable.

۴. Farewell of the Holy Month of Ramadhan

The other important etiquette of the last night is to farewell the Holy Month of Ramadhan, to be sad, feel regret because of its parting, and recite most of the elegant prayers and supplications which have been narrated for this occasion

.([by the Impeccable ones (M'asumin [a

Comments About the Sense and Perception Among Solid Bodies .۵

Perhaps acceptance of the above might be a little bit difficult for some, and they may say: is the month a human being with awareness and a friend with feelings, so that we must say farewell to it? They should read whatever Sayyid Ibn Tawus has mentioned in his book Iqbal in order to find their reply and they should ponder over the following :explanation

It must be understood that time, place, and other lifeless phenomenon, although in this world are lifeless and in their solid state do not possess intelligence and awareness, nevertheless, in accordance with very explicit testimonies of plenty of traditions, which speak about the psychic and next world, as well as on the basis of spiritual contemplation reported by many gnostics, all of them are possessed with life, awareness, intelligence, speaking, friendship, and enmity etc., in some of the worlds far beyond these material worlds. Because all these phenomenon of this world do possess an existence in other worlds - the worlds whose existence, was created much before the creation of this material world as well as extends far beyond the boundaries of this material world. Also, each phenomenon in one of the worlds of creation possesses special features and commands in accordance with the requirements of that particular world of creation, which differs with the features and .commands of other worlds of creation

And the specialities of some of the worlds of creation are that whatever there exists - ,is alive, aware

and alert – because, that world is the world of life, awareness, and intelligence. In accordance with some of the traditions, such is the world of Hereafter, a fact which is :not very far away from the words of Holy Qur'an

".Lo! the home of the Hereafter – that is life, if they but knew"

(Holy Qur'an (۲۹:۶۴ –

:Here, we will refer to some of the traditions which indicate the same point as follows

.A. The traditions which mention about speaking of the fruits of Paradise

B. The traditions which say that the thrones and couches feel happy when the .dwellers of Paradise sit upon them

C. The traditions describe that the earth speaks to believers and unbelievers, and if they do not hear these words it is because the earth's speaking is due to its celestial .existence, and not because of its material existence

D. The speaking of pebbles upon the Holy Prophet's [s] hand is relevant to the same phenomenon. Of course, the speaking of pebbles was also due to their celestial existence and the Prophet's [s] miracle was to enable the material ears to hear the .speech of a celestial being

E. Also, it is because of the same reason that everywhere, a prophet, imam, or saint, through miracles, has made the dead alive, or enabled him to speak, like the staff of Prophet Moses [a] and the bird of Prophet Jesus [a], whose lives were celestial, and Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), in accordance of His wisdom, made this celestial life – which

is hidden from the sight of earthly creatures -manifested upon them, as the famous Iranian mystic poet Maulana(١) has composed these elegant verses regarding this :matter as follows

,(The world is depressed, because it consists of inanimate objects (solid bodies"

.And inanimate objects solid bodies are depressed

,Wait! till the sun of the Day of Judgement arises

.Then you will see the actions of this material world

,Since, the staff of Prophet Moses [a] turns here into a dragon

.It becomes a news for the creatures of this world

,These things are dead here, but are alive in the celestial world

.They are silent observers here, but would speak over there

,Because, the orders were issued from that side

.That staff turns in to a dragon for us

[So do the hills sing hymns in harmony with Prophet David [a

.And the toughness of iron changes in to wax with the touch of his hands

,[The air provides transportation for Prophet Solomon [a

[While the ocean speaks eloquently with Prophet Moses [a

,The moon responds to Prophet Muhammad's [s] indication

.[While the blazing fire turns into a rose garden for Prophet Abraham [a

,The earth swallows Korah (Qaroon) like a snake

While the wood pillar (Astan al-Hanana) in the Prophet's Mosque laments for Prophet

.[Muhammad [s

,[The stone pebbles salute the Prophet Muhammad [s

.[While the mountains communicate with Prophet Yahya [a

,We the (solid bodies) see, hear, and are aware

.But with you strangers, don't communicate

Because, so far you earthly creatures - are entangled within the materialistic ,boundaries

?How could you become intimate with our soul

If you move beyond this material world

Maulana: Maulana Jalaluddin Muhammad (۶۰۴- ۶۷۲ A.H), son of Muhammad bin - ۱ Khatibi famous as Bahauddin, was the most famous scholar and mystic poet of Iran. His father too was a great scholar and mystic of his time. He received his early education under the tutorship of his learned father, and later on after his father's demise, continued his studies under the famous scholar Burhanuddin Mohaqeq Tirmizi. The later encouraged him to pursue his higher studies at the prestigious Literary Learning Center in Damascus. Mualana met with Shams Tabrizi in ۶۴۲ A.H. This meeting had a tremendous impact upon him, and brought a great spiritual revolution in his personality. His most famous mystical poetry works are: ۱. Mathnavi, consists of six volumes, containing ۲۶۰۰ verses of poetry, describing the religious and gnostic sublime realities in a simple language. ۲. Divan al-Kabir, consisting of ۵۰,۰۰۰ .[mystical verses is another literary mystical masterpiece left by Maulana [Tr

,towards the celestial world

.You will then hear the uproar of the various constituents of the universe

Mathnavi ۱۰۰۸/۳ -

With the above explanation it becomes explicit that time, like other lifeless solid bodies in some stages of their existence possess sense, awareness and intelligence, and from this consideration it is possible to speak, share intimate feelings, and say .farewell to it

Yes! At the time of farewell and parting with the Holy month of Ramadhan it is important that the one who does farewell says goodbye, and shows grief and regret, because of his parting and separation, should also possess this worthiness and decency of saying farewell and goodbye to it, as well as should be honest and sincere, .in expressing his grief and sorrow

Otherwise, Allah forbids he would farewell such a dearest month during such a dearest night with lie, discord, and dissimulation. But the worthiness and decency of farewell belong to someone, who has accompanied it because of his own desire, .friendship, love and attachment, from the beginning till the end of the month

And now when this month is parting with him, it is natural that he should say farewell. But the one who had accompanied this month because of reluctance, compulsion and being compulsory, as well as the one who by trampling the requirements of this month has shown his severe opposition, are those, who in reality were not the accompanying friends of the month, and now they will be acting to say farewell; because parting and farewell looks

.beautiful and elegant only when it is done by sincere friends

Also, expression of regret and grief could be true only for them, because so far one does not desire love and company of someone or something, naturally, he would not feel regret and grief from their departing and separation; on the contrary the one who loves, the company of something or someone, would never trample the manners and etiquette of the friendship, and would never do a thing, which could be regarded as opposition to his beloved; rather would endeavour with all of his strength, that .whatever he does should be nearer to his beloved's desires and objectives

Therefore, if you were indeed happy with the arrival of the Holy Month of Ramadhan, enjoyed worshipping and fasting, strove your best for their performance, believed in their merits, esteem, and greatness the way it ought to be, now here, when this month is parting from you, it is quite natural, that this would be hard upon you, making :you sad and aggrieved. Here it is that in this parting, if you say the following

Farewell! O' my fellow companion whose presence was blessings and rewards, and" ".whose parting is full of grief and regret

In this farewell you indeed would be truthful sincere, and if you look towards Allah :(the Glorious, the Exalted), and saying

O' Allah! We do farewell to someone, whose farewell and separation is indeed hard" for us, this pain has broken our hearts, and this separation has made us lonely and

".has engulfed our souls with regret and grief

Then you would be honest and truthful in your prayer and supplications. But Allah forbids, if in parting with the Holy Month of Ramadhan and in complaining at his departure you, uttered the sentences as mentioned above by tongue, while deep inside your heart, were not very happy with his arrival, were not very eager for fasting and worshipping, were sad during his stay, and were not sad from his departure, don't you feel scared that the Holy Month may respond, regarding your parting words as lie and nonsense and may say: `don't you feel ashamed of your '?words

Were you not the one who did not like my company and considered it as hard? Were you not the one, who acted so naive and turned down my blessings, bounties, gifts, and rewards when I offered them for you? Were you not the one who neither came for my welcome because of your love and eagerness nor accompanied me due to friendship and honesty? Were not you the one who desired for my departure, and now although from the tip of your tongue you are reciting the eulogies of separation, !?nevertheless deep inside your heart you are rejoicing

Don't you feel scared that Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), too, instead of accepting your supplication might turn His face away from you, or because of your breaking the bounds of His reverence through false supplications and lying with the tip of your tongue, might punish

you? O' you poor destitute, the loser who has entangled himself into degradation and !wretchedness, by wasting the Lord's blessings and bounties

What would you do, and how horrible a condition would you be in, if Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), scrutinized you for your crime of lying in supplications, and punished you for your sin of hypocrisy and discard! Would you have an answer for ?your Lord? Would you have a path for your rescue

Therefore, if you recognize correctly Holy Month of Ramadhan, know its merit and worth before Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), discover its blessings, generosity, bounties, and rewards with respect to yourself; then you will find this month like an exalted and benevolent guest, who has came to your home, only for a few days, so that it could release you from Hell, could take your hand, thus, carrying you along with him, towards the most superior and most sublime spiritual positions, making you neighbours with the prophets, angels, righteous saints, and ultimately leading you even to sit in front of Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), Himself, how would you ?encounter with such a guest

And how much would you be pleased in accompanying and escorting him? Wouldn't you be taking good care of him during his presence? And wouldn't you be pleased from being benefited from the pleasure of his company? Wouldn't you be sacrificing upon him your heart and soul? Wouldn't you regard his presence as extremely pleasant and dearest, and his separation as

?extremely painful and bitter

Yes! If you appreciated correctly the reverence of the Holy Month of Ramadhan, you will treat him like the above guest; at the time of his departure would feel in this manner; while saying farewell to him your condition would become similar to Imam Sajjad's [a]; the way you would be saying farewell to him, the Holy Month of Ramadhan too would be saying farewell to you in an elegant manner: the way you would be feeling sad and full of grief, it too, because of your separation, would be in grief; because, the kindness and generosity of exalted ones towards the smaller .ones, are far greater than the love and friendship of smaller ones towards them

And for those, who had mixed and varied affairs during this month, i.e. sometimes, they felt happiness in their heart for Ramadhan's arrival, were happy and pleased in it's company, paid respect towards it's worth, merits and excellence, were benefited from it's blessings and bounties, saturated their souls from it's illuminations, and over all acknowledged it's rights the way they ought to have been. But occasionally some of the times forgot them, acted in a manner which was not proper for this month, or .even by performance of indecent deeds violated the reverence of this month

It is up to them that in this last night should make their best endeavours, should open their tongue for apologizing with truth and sincerity; in order to indicate their regret, apology, repentance, and request, should

do whatever they can, and in this manner should compensate for their shortcomings and negligence shown towards their noble guest, thus, making it contented and pleased. Because, his is an exalted guest who has been sent by Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), near us for goodness, blessings, prosperity, rewards, and not for inflicting loss and damage. Therefore, from this consideration it is so exalted that if we open our tongue for pardon, and sincerely indicate our feeling ashamed and repentant it .will certainly accept our excuse and would over look our unfair actions

How to Farewell the Holy Month of Ramadhan .۶

:It would be appropriate to open the tongue for an excuse as follows

O' Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted)! Through this noble month you did a great favour upon us and bestowed a great blessing, but alas, we did not appreciate it's worth, and by wasting this golden opportunity have oppressed our own selves, that you know about the dimensions of this calamity more than others. O' Allah (the Glorious, the !(Exalted

Now that the Holy month has reached to the end and we would not longer have it's blessed days and nights at our disposal; the wind of Your blessings has blown towards us and awakened us from the deep sleep of ignorance; now we have realized that how much dearest one has been lost; with this loss, what terrible calamity we have .inflicted upon our self

Now, we don't know any other way, except to look towards You; we admit our mistakes and wrongs which we have

done to ourselves; that we have lost this great generosity feel sorry, that we have remained empty-handed from all those bounties shed tears with grief; now, who else is there except You, who could rescue us from this loss, and could treat this scare of intense grief from our hearts, and could lighten the burden of sins and regrets, which ?is so heavy upon our souls

O' Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted)! In spite of our bad condition, wretchedness, deviations, and indecencies, we discovered that You have not forgotten and abandoned us to ourselves, has not released us in ignorance and negligence, and have not closed the doors of repentance upon us; otherwise, You wouldn't have made .us aware of our mistakes and losses

Therefore, there is room, not to be disappointed from Your Generosity, not to turn off our eyes from Your blessings and bounties, not to remain empty-handed from Your Kindness, because, no one becomes hopeless from You except unbelievers, and no .one except losers close their eyes from the threshold of Your Magnanimity

Therefore, O' my Lord! You are so Exalted, Magnanimous an Acceptor that you accepted the magicians of Pharaoh's court, accepted his own prayer, and even did not return empty-handed, Satan, Your worst servant. For the sake of reverence of the Holy Prophet [s], please do accept me in this night, grant my prayers, change my wickedness into many fold goodness, delete my name from the list of losers and those who have suffered severe damages, by

entering it in to the list of righteous and prosperous ones, and bestow upon me the .companionship of Your most favourite saints

O' my Lord! My sinning, deviations, indecencies, boldness, and immodesty have blackened my face; for the sake of the illumination of the Holy Prophet [s], and his Holy Progeny Ahlul Bait [a], please look upon me with Your Generosity, and allow me to sit under the shadow of Your Blessing. O' my Lord! This is the month of Your feast, You Yourself don't like that a host should act miserly in treating his guests, even if this hospitality would result in a loss for the host. But O' Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted)! Whatever You increase in Your benevolence and hospitality (towards Your guests) You have bestowed it upon Your own domain and kingdom, but if You deprive me .from Your hospitality I would be left out hungry while sitting upon Your tablecloth

Yes! It is up to such a person to see off this month through performing a perfect repentance with truth and sincerity, keeping in mind never to repeat the sinning, .deviations, and transgressions committed by him in the past

The Last Day of the Holy Month of Ramadhan .۷

At the end of the last day of the Holy Month of Ramadhan, the day of presentation of deeds, it is up to us to seek refuge with the impeccable ones M'asumin [a] i.e. the Holy Prophet [s] and his Holy Progeny Ahlul-Bait [a], and the one, to whom that particular day belongs - resort (tawassul) towards the threshold

of their generosity, through our best conduct in accordance with all the codes and etiquette; should keep our self engaged in supplications, while resorting and communicating with them, should utilize such phrases and sentences, and should indicate such humility and abjectness, thus arising their sentiments, so that they could look at us with love and kindness; could extend the shadow of their generosity and .could pour upon us the rain of their love and benevolence

Then with apology and excuse, we should present our deeds of the month of them; with humility we must beg and request them, that through their prayer and intercession should make our deeds as good ones, should keep them immune from defects and calamities, should request Allah (the Glorious, the Exalted), that for the sake of His Own Exaltedness may accept them, as well as may multiply them many .fold with reward and goodness

If we perform the last day's deeds in the state of prostration, end the Holy Month of Ramadhan while hungry and prostrating, entering into the night of Eid ul-Fitr, it could be genuinely expected that we will be benefited from Allah's blessing, kindness, and .generosity far beyond our imaginations

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ٩

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ٢٠٠٧, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities .in religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field

and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes of people interested in reading, with various formats in the .cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

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paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

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.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

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Producing thousands of research software in three languages (Persian, Arabic and- English) which can be performed in computers, tablets and cellphones and available and downloadable with eight international formats: JAVA, ANDROID, EPUB, CHM, PDF, HTML, CHM, GHB on the website

Also producing four markets named "Ghaemiyeh Book Market" with Android, IOS,- WINDOWS PHONE and WINDOWS editions

:Appreciation

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